星野之宣

Stardust memorys by Yukinobu Hoshino

スターダストメモリーズ

Scholar Manga Bunko Series

スターダストメモリーズ

星野之宣

スコラ
漫画文庫
シリーズ
590+税

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星野 之宣
Yukinobu Hoshino

北海道出身。
昭和50年「太陽惑星イカルス」でデビュー。
同年『はるかなる朝』で第9回手塚賞に輝く。
昭和51年『ブルーシティー』、
翌年『巨人たちの伝説』を発表。
スケール感あふれるSF巨編を次々と執筆。
本格SF漫画家として、高く評価される。
代表作
『ヤマトの火』、『2001夜物語』、
『恒星風と共に去りぬ』、『ヤマタイカ 』、
『ブルーホール』など。

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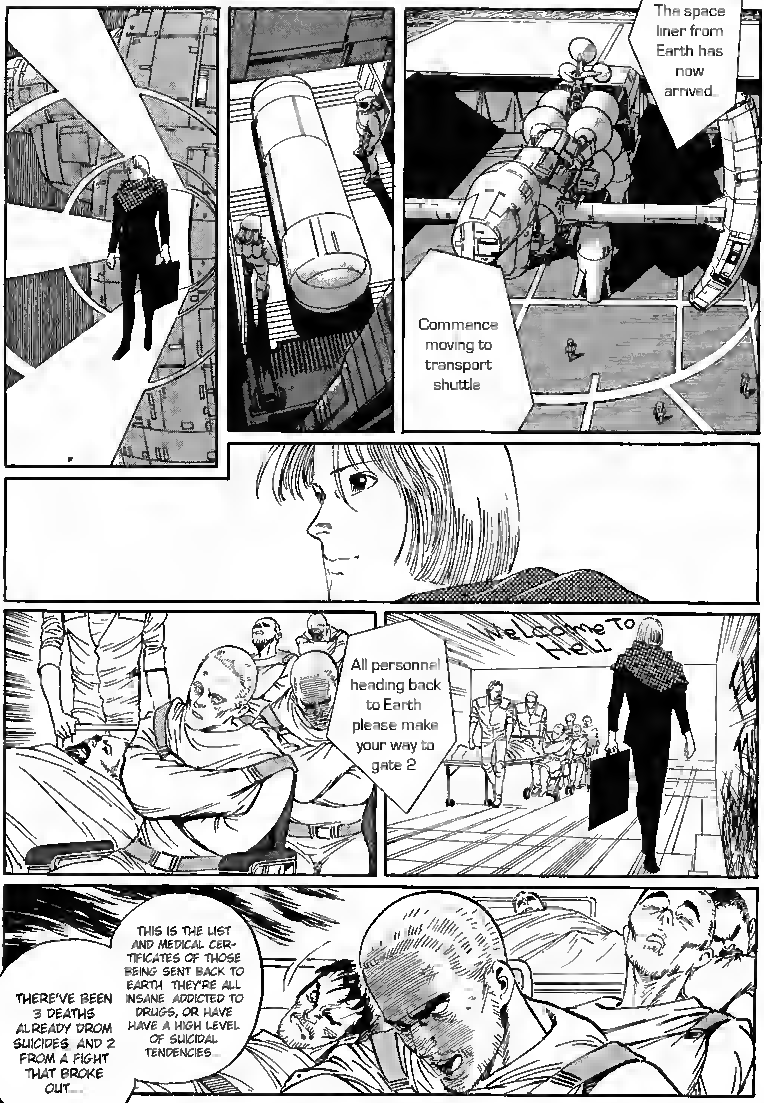
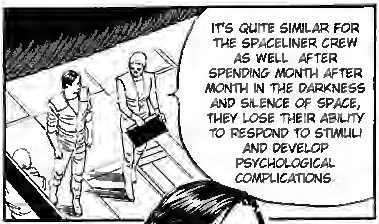
Star Dust Memories

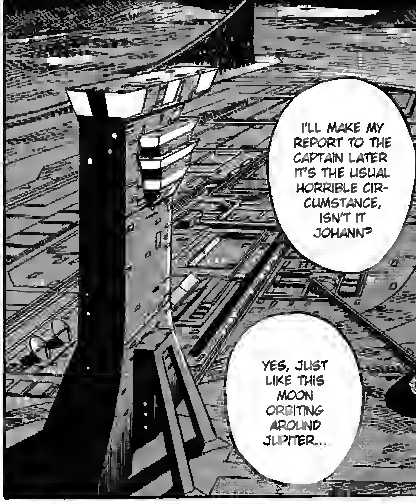
スターダストメモリーズ
Vol.1 A Poet's Journey

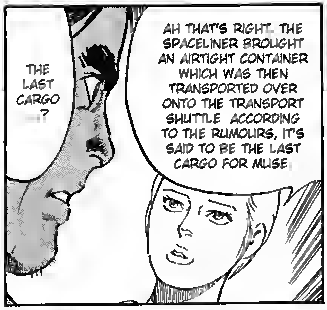
My name is Johann. I'm an engineer for the interstellar spaceship "Muse." The hard days of labour are almost over and soon I'll be able to return to Earth.
I'm just an ordinary, normal human...
One Mining Base located on Jupiter's Moon, Europa

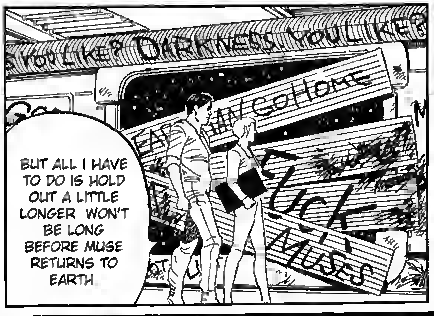

The space liner from Earth has now arrived...
Commence moving to transport shuttle
All personnel heading back to Earth please make your way to gate 2
Welcome To Hell
THERE'VE BEEN 3 DEATHS ALREADY FROM SUICIDES AND 2 FROM A FIGHT THAT BROKE OUT...
THIS IS THE LIST AND MEDICAL CERTIFICATES OF THOSE BEING SENT BACK TO EARTH. THEY'RE ALL INSANE, ADDICTED TO DRUGS, OR HAVE HAVE A HIGH LEVEL OF SUICIDAL TENDENCIES.

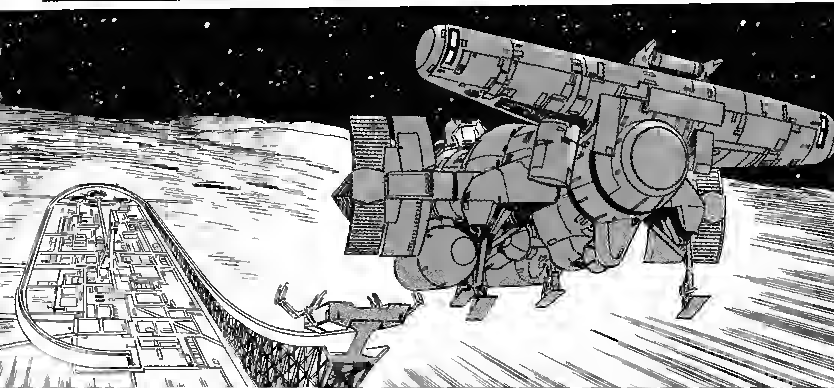

IT'S QUITE SIMILAR FOR THE SPACELINER CREW AS WELL. AFTER SPENDING MONTH AFTER MONTH IN THE DARKNESS AND SILENCE OF SPACE, THEY LOSE THEIR ABILITY TO RESPOND TO STIMULI AND DEVELOP PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPLICATIONS.

I THINK MORE AND MORE OFTEN THESE DAYS... THAT HUMANS SIMPLY AREN'T FIT TO LIVE IN SPACE.

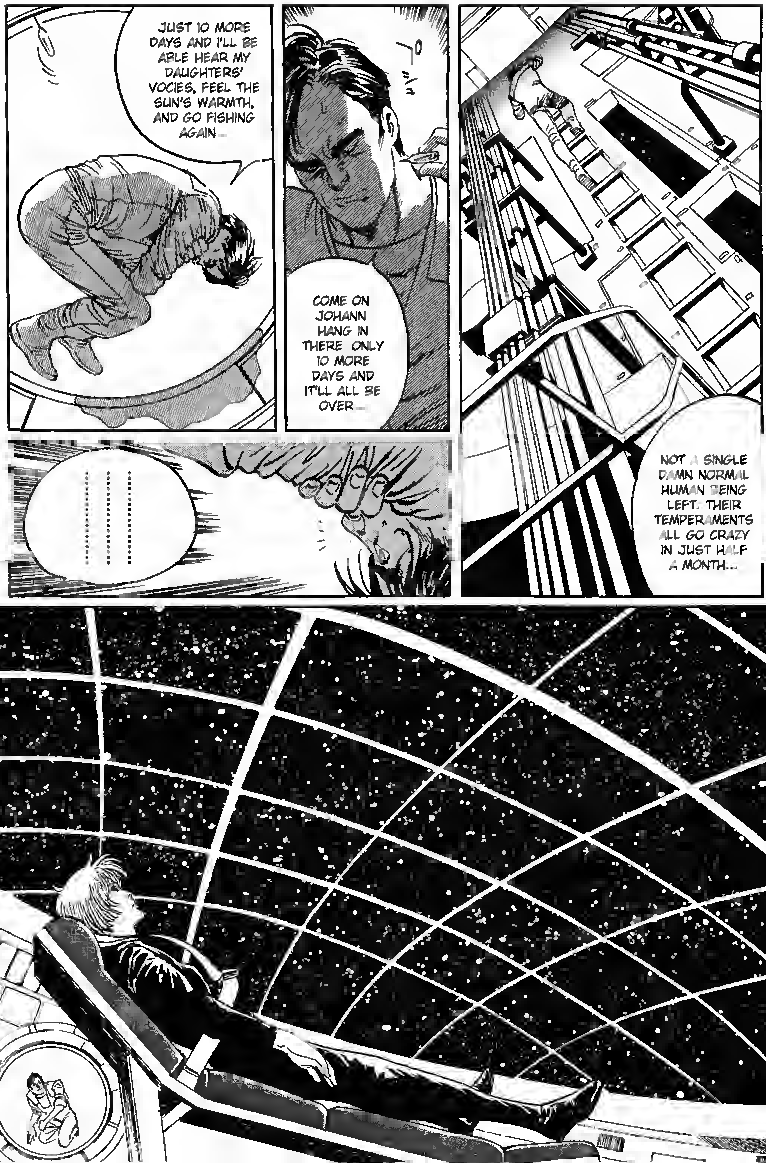

I'LL MAKE MY REPORT TO THE CAPTAIN LATER. IT'S THE USUAL HORRIBLE CIRCUMSTANCE, ISN'T IT JOHANN?
YES, JUST LIKE THIS MOON ORBITING AROUND JUPITER...


THE LAST CARGO?
AH THAT'S RIGHT. THE SPACELINER BROUGHT AN AIRTIGHT CONTAINER WHICH WAS THEN TRANSPORTED OVER ONTO THE TRANSPORT SHUTTLE. ACCORDING TO THE RUMOURS, IT'S SAID TO BE THE LAST CARGO FOR MUSE.


DARKNESS
GO HOME
Fuck
Muses
BUT ALL I HAVE TO DO IS HOLD OUT A LITTLE LONGER. WON'T BE LONG BEFORE MUSE RETURNS TO EARTH.

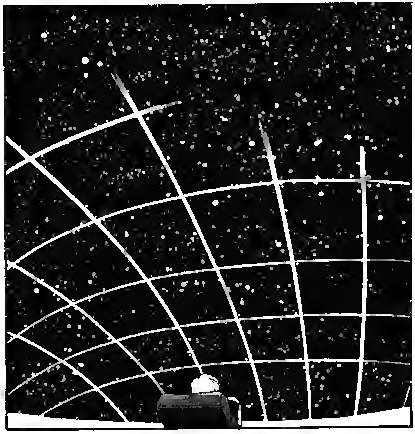


HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON!?
BZZT
This is the transport shuttle over. We've left Europa and are headed to Muse at the moment.
YOU MAKE ME SICK!
THIS SON OF A BITCH TRIED TO CHANGE THE VIRTUAL SCENERY TO BEACHES OF WAIKIKI!
I'LL KILL YOU FOR THIS!
SETTLE DOWN, BOTH OF YOU! IT'S JUST A DAMN VIDEO SCENERY! NOW GET READY TO WORK ONCE WE ARRIVE ON MUSE!

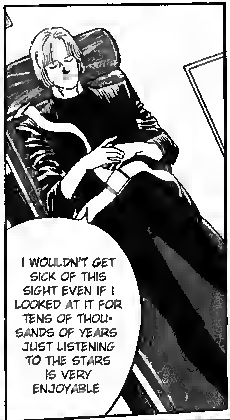

JUST 10 MORE DAYS AND I'LL BE ABLE HEAR MY DAUGHTERS' VOICES, FEEL THE SUN'S WARMTH, AND GO FISHING AGAIN...
COME ON JOHANN HANG IN THERE ONLY 10 MORE DAYS AND IT'LL ALL BE OVER...
NOT A SINGLE DAMN NORMAL HUMAN BEING LEFT. THEIR TEMPERAMENTS ALL GO CRAZY IN JUST HALF A MONTH...

.....
.....
MY NAME'S JOHANN. YOU MUST BE ONE OF THE PERSONNEL IN CHARGE OF THE MUSE PROJECT THAT ARRIVED BY THE SPACELINER FROM EARTH RECENTLY.
YES, I'M LI TRINITY
SORRY FOR DISTURBING YOU, BUT I NEED TO GO THROUGH HERE
AH I HEARD A LITTLE ABOUT YOU FROM YOUR SHIP'S DOCTOR
SHE TOLD ME THAT YOU DIDN'T ENTER THE HIBERNATION TUBE NOT EVEN ONCE DURING YOUR 4 MONTH-LONG FLIGHT BECAUSE YOU WERE TOO BUSY GAZING AT THE STARS
IT'S QUITE PECULIAR PEOPLE NORMALLY GET SICK OF LOOKING OUT AT SPACE FOR SO LONG
WERE YOU WHISPERING SOMETHING JUST NOW?

BUT I CAN'T SEEM TO TALK VERY WELL...
YES, I WAS TRYING TO REPLY BACK TO THE STARS WHO WERE TALKING TO ME...



PARDON?

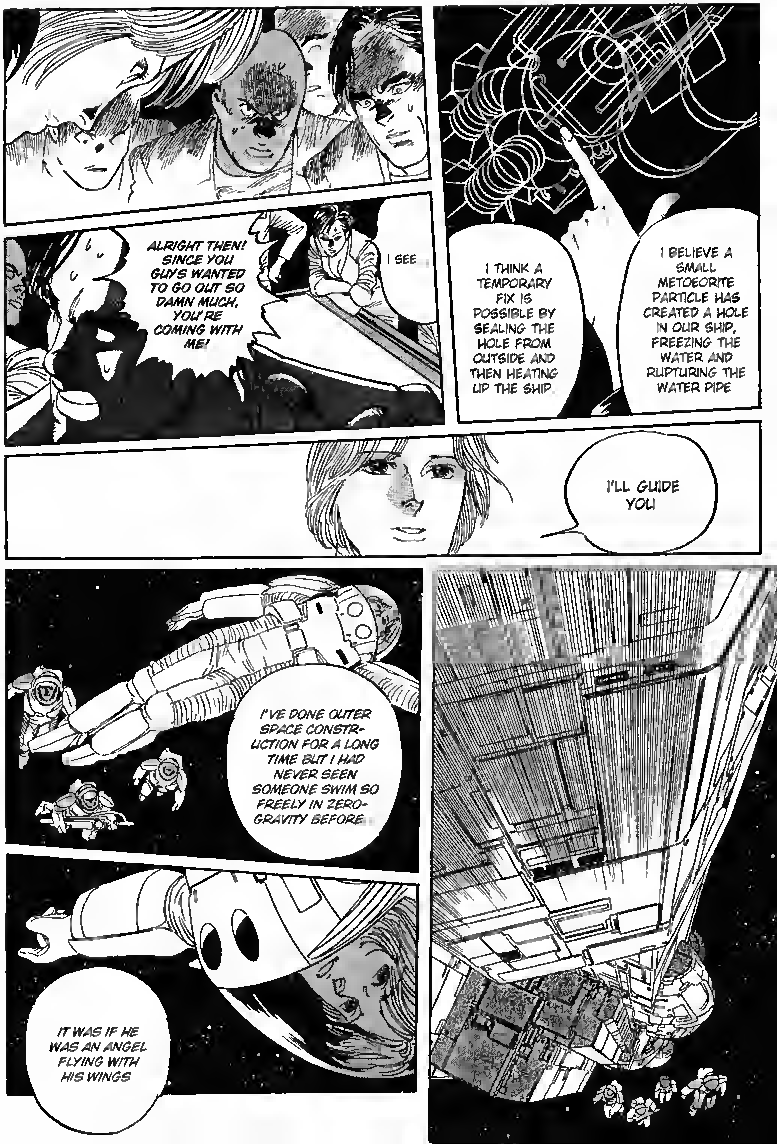

I WOULDN'T GET SICK OF THIS SIGHT EVEN IF I LOOKED AT IT FOR TENS OF THOUSANDS OF YEARS JUST LISTENING TO THE STARS IS VERY ENJOYABLE

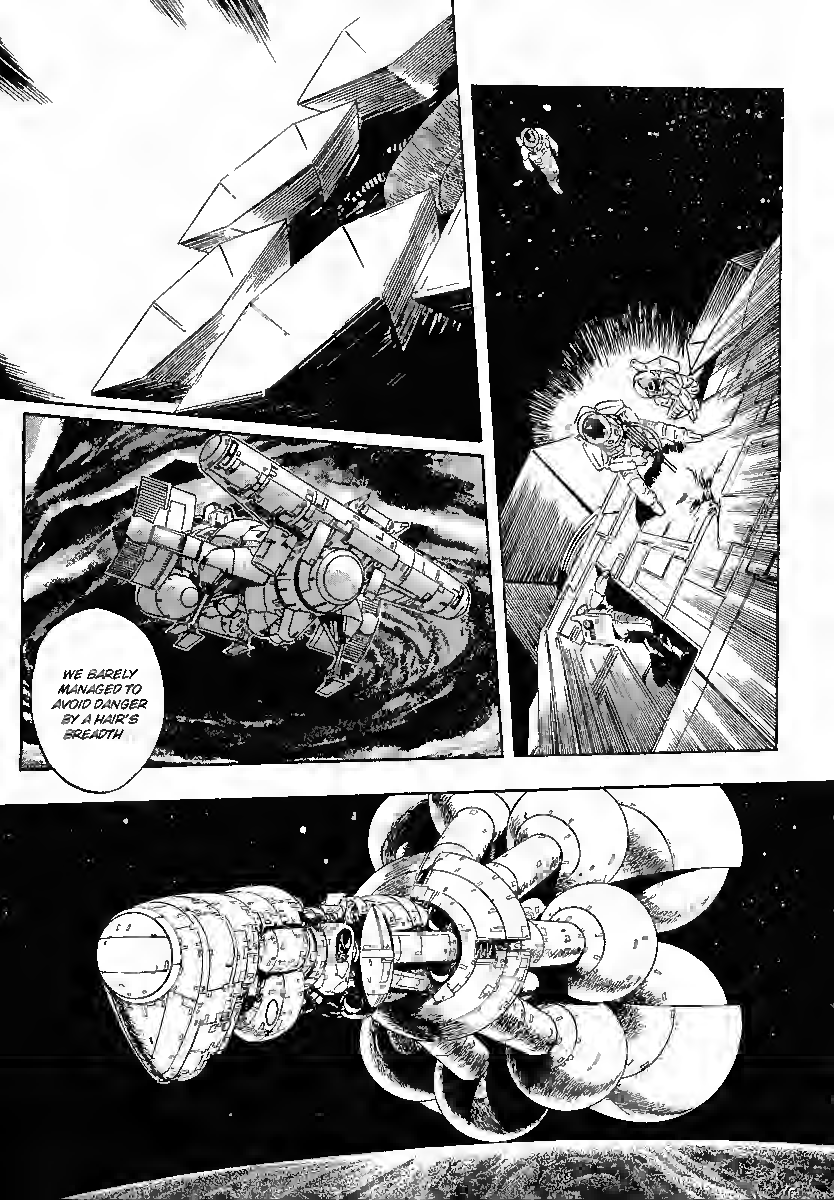
WELL BYE THEN...
SOME POET HE IS. GUESS SOME PEOPLE ALREADY ARRIVE HERE CRAZY...

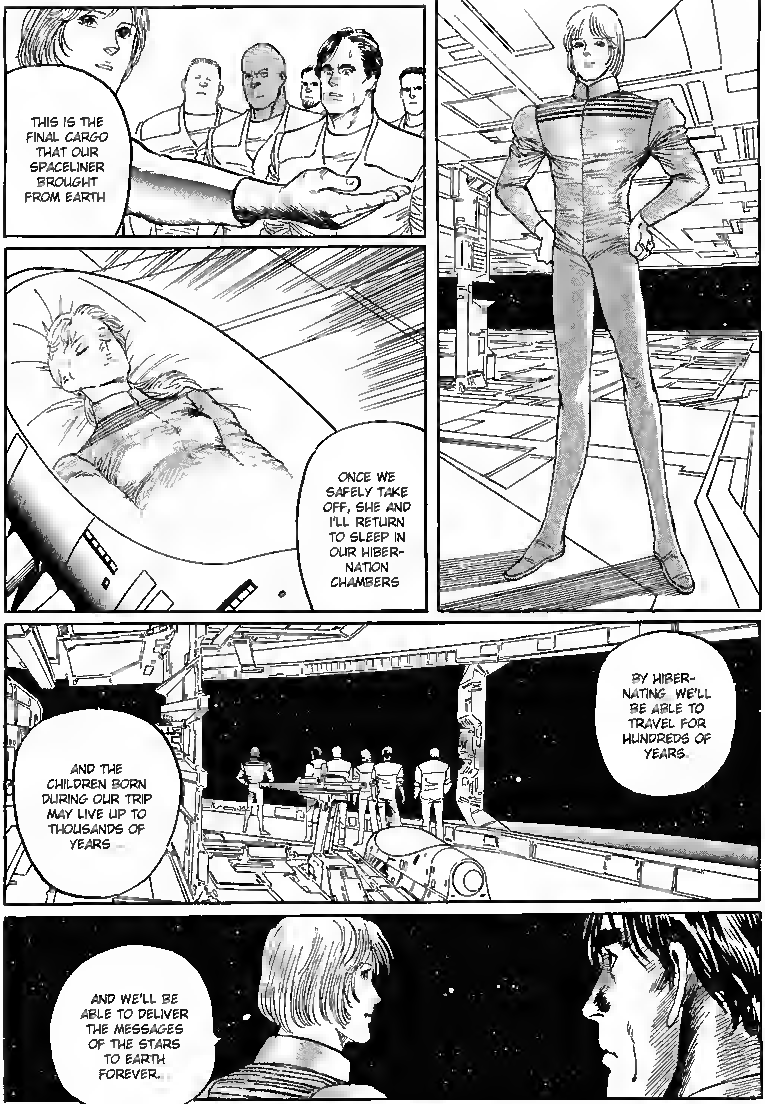
THE INTER-STELLAR SPACESHIP PROJECT CALLED MUSE WAS ONCE ALSO KNOWN AS THE DAEDALUS PROJECT.
THE FUEL SOURCE DEUTERIUM WOULD BE COLLECTED FROM JUPITER'S ATMOSPHERE WHILE THE METALS WOULD BE MINED FROM ITS MOON EUROPA.
ONCE ENOUGH SUPPLIES ARE COLLECTED A SPACESHIP BY NUCLEAR FUSION POWERED PROPULSION WOULD BE ABLE TO GO ON A ONE-WAY TRIP TO OTHER PLANETS FAR, FAR AWAY.
YES, THAT'S RIGHT. A ONE-WAY TRIP...
LIKE A METEORITE ETERNALLY HURTLING THROUGH SPACE AT A GREAT SPEED....
CAUTION
ALERT
30 MINUTES AWAY FROM ARRIVING ON THE SPACE-SHIP MUSE BEGINNING DECELE-RATION

WHAT!? THE MAIN ENGINES WON'T TURN OFF!?
WE'RE EITHER GOING TO BE WANDERING SPACE FOREVER OR BE SWALLOWED UP BY JUPITER AT THIS RATE!
WE CAN'T DECELER-ATE LIKE THIS!
THE CAUSE IS STILL UNCERTAIN BUT THE WATER TANKS DON'T SEEM TO BE FEEDING PROPERLY INTO THE NUCLEAR ENGINES!
THE CONTROL SYSTEMS AREN'T WORKING! DAMN IT, WHAT THE HELL DID THE MAINTENANCE CREW DO...!
I'M TRYING ALREADY! SO LET GO OF ME!
D-DO SOME-THING CAPTAIN!
YOU'RE SAYING WE'RE ALL GONERS IF WE DON'T DECELERATE WITHIN 20 MINUTES!?
.....

I'M GONNA PUT ON THESE SPACE SUITS AND DECELERATE ON MY OWN USING ITS THRUSTERS! IF I'M LUCKY, THE WORK-SHIPS MIGHT COME AND PICK ME UP!
I'M GETTING OUT!
WE ONLY HAD 10 MORE DAYS LEFT BEFORE GOING HOME! JUST 10 DAYS!
N-NO, IT CAN'T BE!
A STRANGE DISTORTION HAS HAPPENED DUE TO THE CELESTIAL BODIES.
THE SHIP'S INERTIAL MOVEMENT SEEMS TO BE ABNORMAL
MOVE IT!!!
I.. I'M GOING OUT TOO! LIKE HELL I'M GOING TO DIE ON THIS SHIP!
W-WAIT ...!

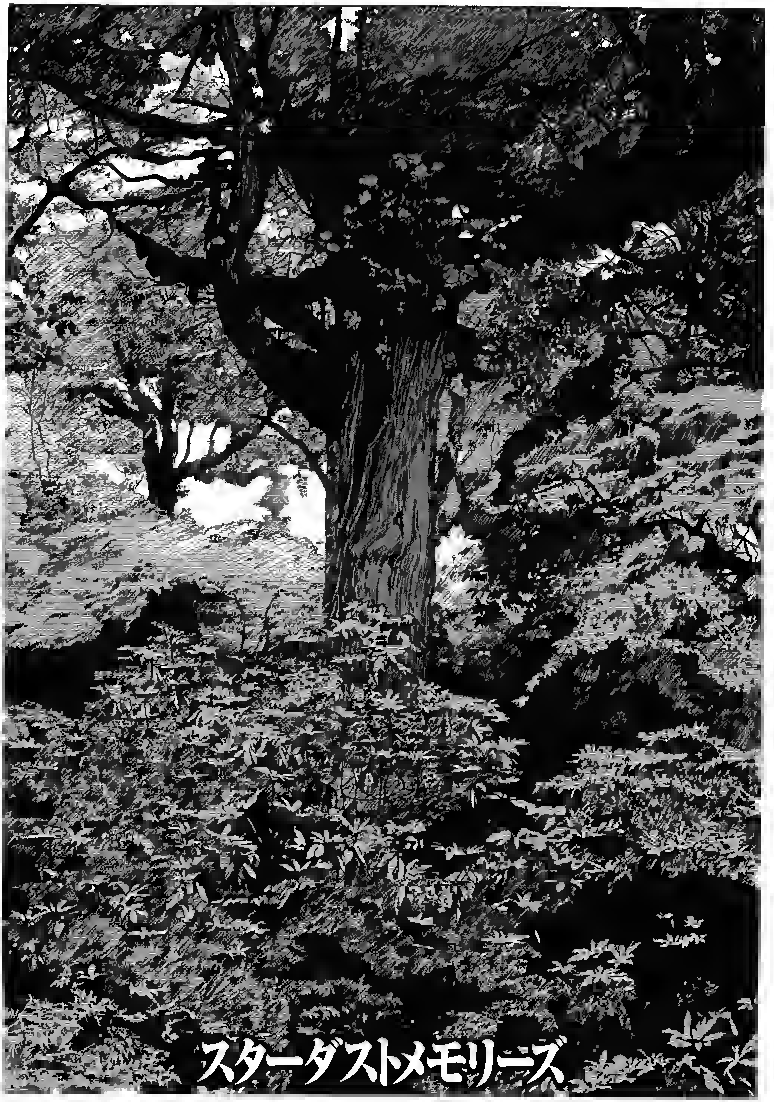

I BELIEVE A SMALL METEORITE PARTICLE HAS CREATED A HOLE IN OUR SHIP, FREEZING THE WATER AND RUPTURING THE WATER PIPE
I THINK A TEMPORARY FIX IS POSSIBLE BY SEALING THE HOLE FROM OUTSIDE AND THEN HEATING UP THE SHIP
I SEE
ALRIGHT THEN! SINCE YOU GUYS WANTED TO GO OUT SO DAMN MUCH, YOU'RE COMING WITH ME!
I'LL GUIDE YOU
I'VE DONE OUTER SPACE CONSTRUCTION FOR A LONG TIME BUT I HAD NEVER SEEN SOMEONE SWIM SO FREELY IN ZERO-GRAVITY BEFORE
IT WAS IF HE WAS AN ANGEL FLYING WITH HIS WINGS


WE BARELY MANAGED TO AVOID DANGER BY A HAIR'S BREADTH

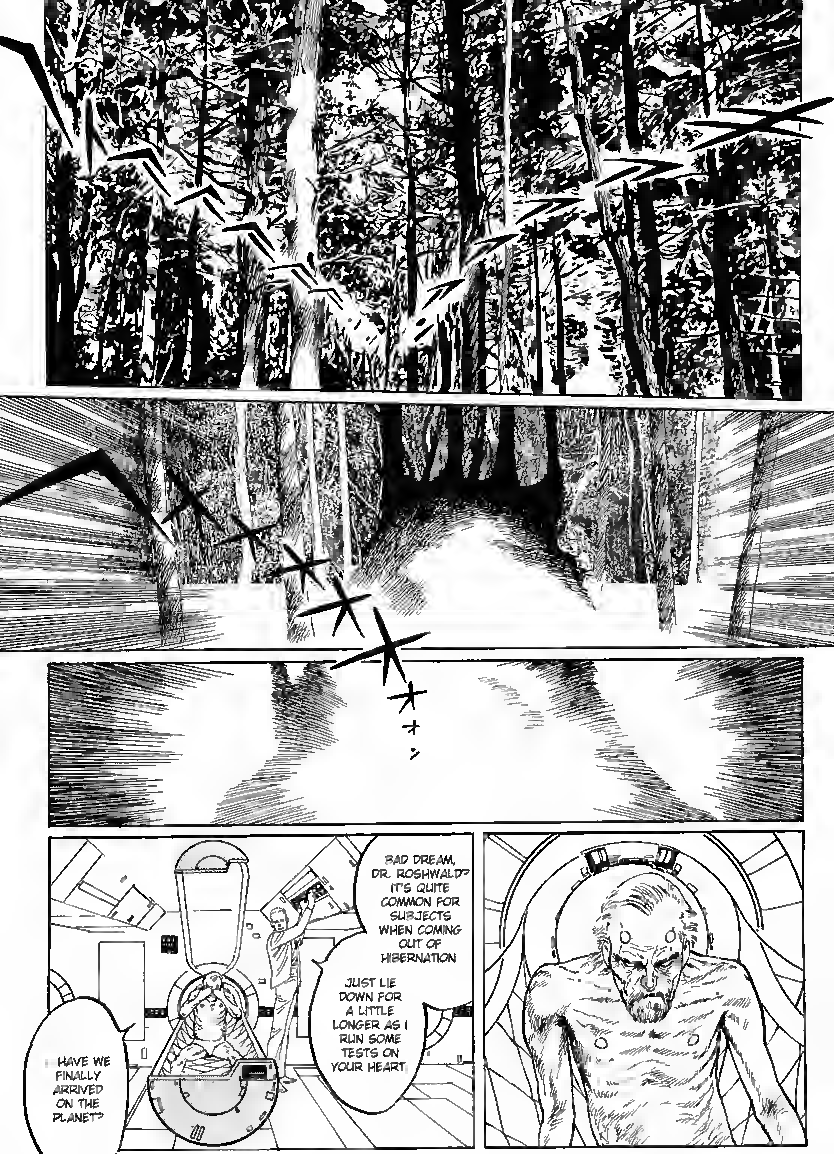

THIS IS THE FINAL CARGO THAT OUR SPACELINER BROUGHT FROM EARTH
ONCE WE SAFELY TAKE OFF, SHE AND I'LL RETURN TO SLEEP IN OUR HIBER-NATION CHAMBERS
BY HIBER-NATING WE'LL BE ABLE TO TRAVEL FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS.
AND THE CHILDREN BORN DURING OUR TRIP MAY LIVE UP TO THOUSANDS OF YEARS
AND WE'LL BE ABLE TO DELIVER THE MESSAGES OF THE STARS TO EARTH FOREVER.

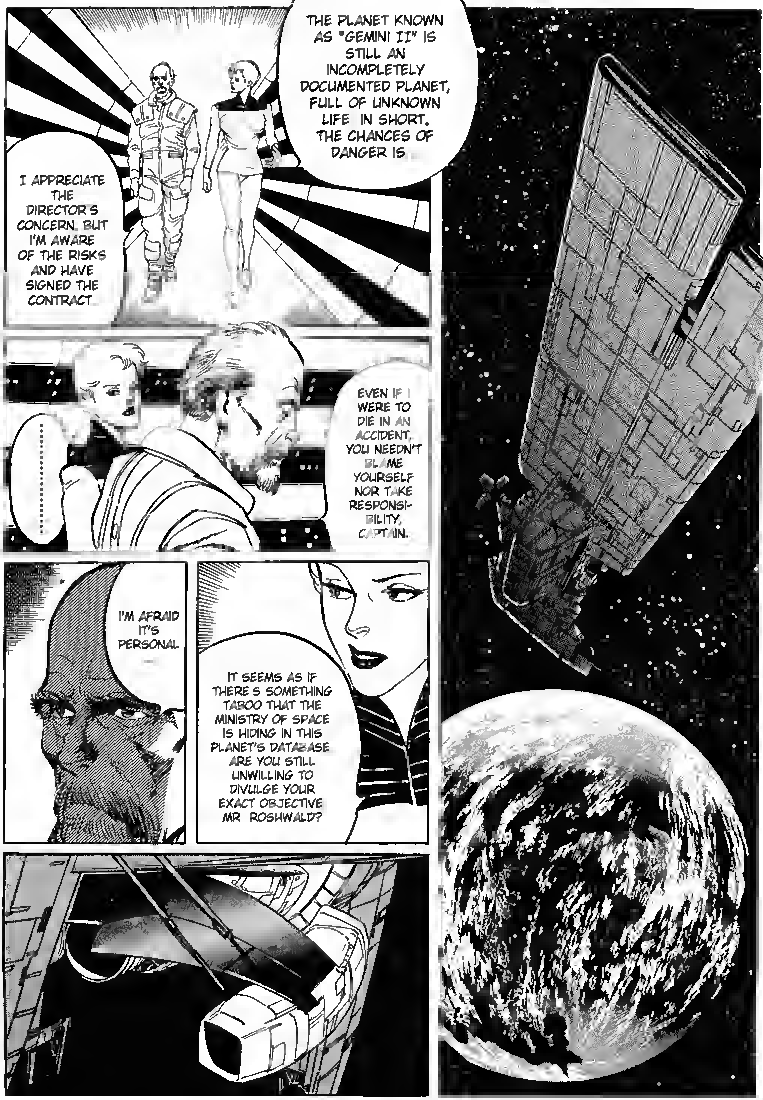
I wonder... If we will be able to hear the voices of space in the future?
We are now returning back home. Back to earth and its habitable atmosphere for it is the only place we can live
We are nothing but plain old ordinary humans
They on the other hand are beings perfectly suited to live in the vastness of space and freely choose to live in it
The songs and poems of the stars...?

Star Dust Memories

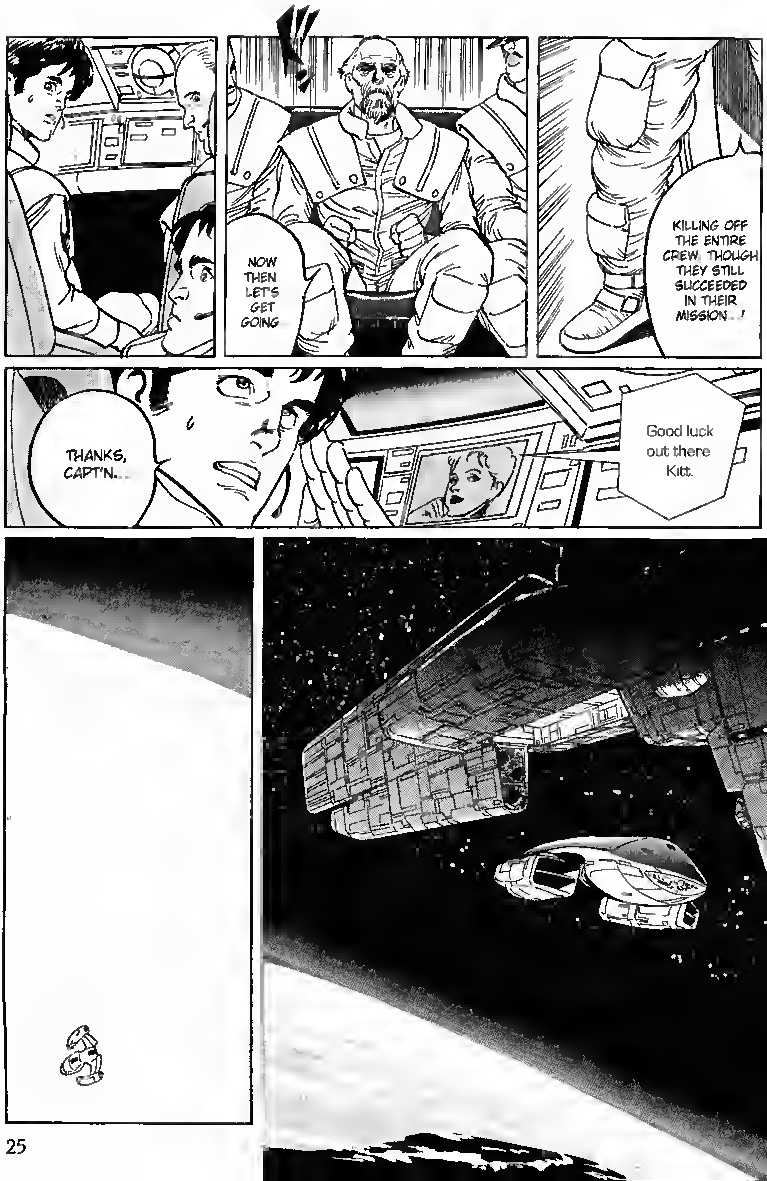


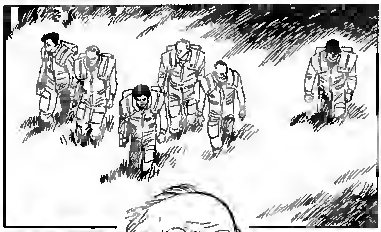
Vol.2 Planet of the Spirits

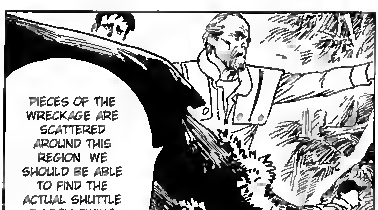

オオン
BAD DREAM, DR. ROSHWALD? IT'S QUITE COMMON FOR SUBJECTS WHEN COMING OUT OF HIBERNATION
JUST LIE DOWN FOR A LITTLE LONGER AS I RUN SOME TESTS ON YOUR HEART
HAVE WE FINALLY ARRIVED ON THE PLANET?

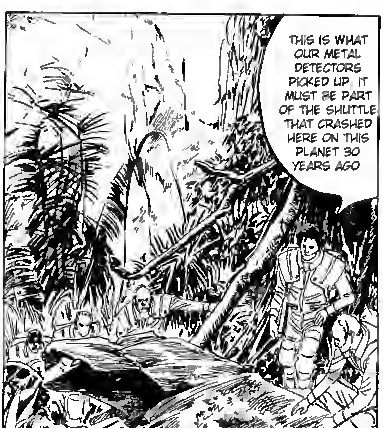

THE PLANET KNOWN AS "GEMINI II" IS STILL AN INCOMPLETELY DOCUMENTED PLANET, FULL OF UNKNOWN LIFE IN SHORT, THE CHANCES OF DANGER IS
I APPRECIATE THE DIRECTOR'S CONCERN, BUT I'M AWARE OF THE RISKS AND HAVE SIGNED THE CONTRACT
EVEN IF I WERE TO DIE IN AN ACCIDENT, YOU NEEDN'T BLAME YOURSELF NOR TAKE RESPONSIBILITY, CAPTAIN.
I'M AFRAID IT'S PERSONAL
IT SEEMS AS IF THERE'S SOMETHING TABOO THAT THE MINISTRY OF SPACE IS HIDING IN THIS PLANET'S DATABASE ARE YOU STILL UNWILLING TO DIVULGE YOUR EXACT OBJECTIVE MR ROSHWALD?

ROSHWALD? YOU MEAN THE FOUNDER OF THAT MAJOR MANUFACTURER OF PLANET RECONNAISSANCE ROBOTS!?
THE SAME MAN WHO FORCED A LOT OF PEOPLE OUT OF THEIR JOBS BY POPULARIZING THE USAGE OF ROBOTS FOR DANGEROUS SURVEY WORK. OF COURSE, HE SAVED COUNTLESS HUMAN LIVES BY DOING SO
SOMETHING ABOUT HIM HAVING HEART COMPLICATIONS DUE TO OLD AGE BUT I HEARD HE USED TO BE A PRETTY DAMN GOOD ASTRONAUT IN THE PAST.
AGH, JEEZ...
SO THAT'S THE MINISTRY'S VIP?
SO WHY THE HELL DO WE HAVE TO PROTECT A GUY LIKE HIM? WHY NOT JUST USE ROBOTS INSTEAD?
Shuttle Disengaged All systems ready
WELL, THE RECORDS HERE ALSO GO ON TO SAY THAT THEY ATTEMPTED TO DEVELOP THE PLANET BY BRINGING MANY PLANT SEEDS FROM EARTH
BUT THEN THE SHUTTLE CRASHED, KILLING OFF...
THAT'S ODD... ACCORDING TO THE RECORDS, THEY ONLY FOUND MICROBES ON THE PLANET BACK THEN BUT LOOK. THE WHOLE PLANET IS COVERED WITH VEGETATION.
THERE'S GEMINI II THERE WAS A RECONAISSANCE CREW SENT HERE 30 YEARS AGO


KILLING OFF THE ENTIRE CREW, THOUGH THEY STILL SUCCEEDED IN THEIR MISSION...!
NOW THEN LET'S GET GOING
Good luck out there Kitt.
THANKS, CAPT'N...




PIECES OF THE WRECKAGE ARE SCATTERED AROUND THIS REGION WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND THE ACTUAL SHUTTLE BY FOLLOWING THESE SCRAPS


THIS IS WHAT OUR METAL DETECTORS PICKED UP. IT MUST BE PART OF THE SHUTTLE THAT CRASHED HERE ON THIS PLANET 30 YEARS AGO

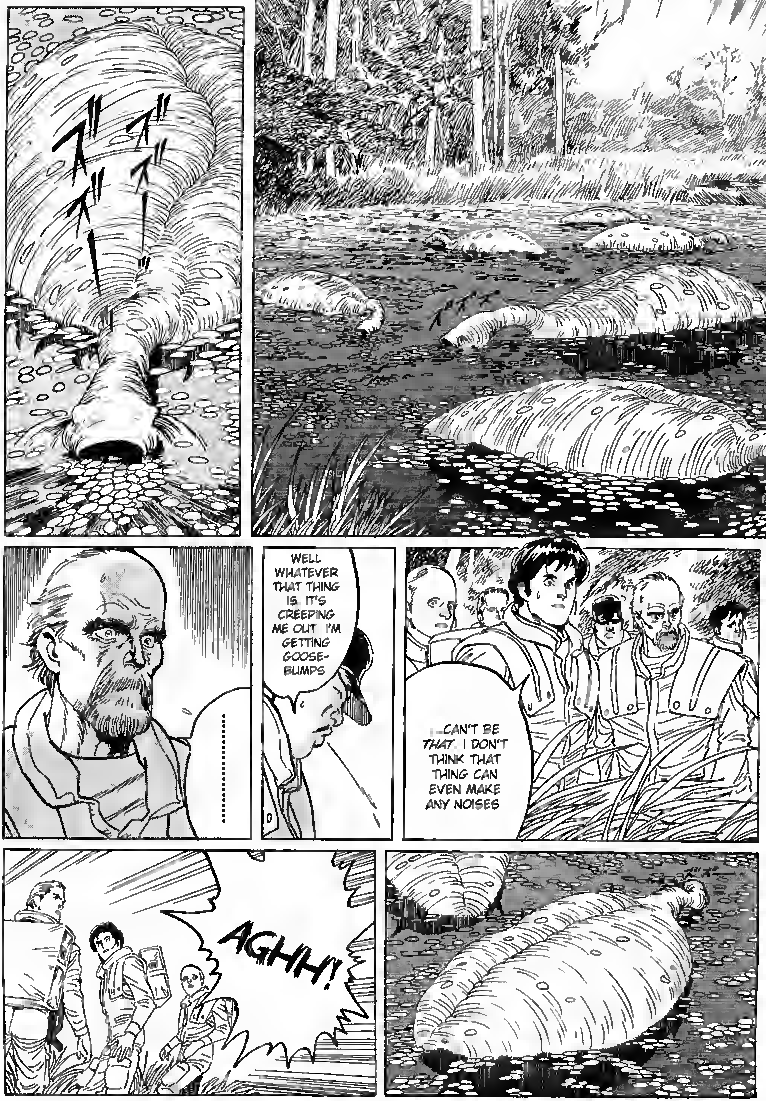
ALMOST SEEMS AS IF YOU'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE
WERE YOU PERHAPS A MEMBER ON THE RESCUE TEAM THAT CAME HERE BACK THEN...?

NEVER SENT?
NO... THERE WAS NEVER A RESCUE TEAM SENT HERE

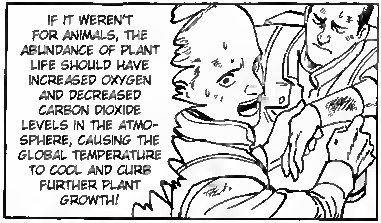
BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT'S UP WITH THIS JUNGLE? HOW THE HELL CAN ALL THIS SPRING UP IN JUST 30 YEARS? AND EVEN CONSIDERING HOW WIND COULD'VE SCATTERED THE PLANT SEEDS FOR THE WHOLE PLANET TO BE ALREADY COVERED IN THICK VEGETATION LIKE THIS IS JUST ABNORMAL

BUT THE RECONNAISSANCE CREW MEMBERS MUST HAVE HAD FAMILIES. I'M SURE THEY AT LEAST TRIED TO RECOVER THE CREW'S BODIES

THERE MAY HAVE ONLY BEEN SOME PRIMITIVE ORGANISMS ON THIS PLANET BEFORE.
BASICALLY, THEY TALK ABOUT HOW WHEN A CERTAIN REGION IS UNDERGOES SOME TYPE OF CHANGE, THE VERY SAME THING COULD HAPPEN IN ANOTHER REGION AS WELL.
WELL, THERE IS THIS THEORY CALLED SYNCHRONICITY.
I RECALL THERE BEING SOME EVOLUTIONARY THEORIES USING SYNCHRONICITY PUT FORTH RECENTLY IN THE FIELD OF PLANETARY BIOLOGY.
WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
SYNCHRONICITY, HUH...
BUT WHEN THE PLANET CAME INTO CONTACT WITH THE GENES OF HIGHER EVOLVED PLANT-LIFE OF EARTH, OTHER ORGANISMS MAY HAVE SOMEHOW BEEN STIMULATED TO CHANGE RAPIDLY.
AS IF THEY'RE ALL TRYING TO RESONATE TO THE SAME SOUND OF A TUNING FORK...
WILD ANIMAL!? BUT I THOUGHT THERE WEREN'T ANY ANIMALS HERE?
MAYBE IT'S SOME WILD ANIMAL?


WELL WHATEVER THAT THING IS, IT'S CREEPING ME OUT. I'M GETTING GOOSE-BUMPS
...CAN'T BE THAT. I DON'T THINK THAT THING CAN EVEN MAKE ANY NOISES
AGHH!

UGH...
KAH!
KAH!
S...
STOP!
EVERY-
BODY,
FALL
BACK!


IF IT WEREN'T FOR ANIMALS, THE ABUNDANCE OF PLANT LIFE SHOULD HAVE INCREASED OXYGEN AND DECREASED CARBON DIOXIDE LEVELS IN THE ATMOSPHERE, CAUSING THE GLOBAL TEMPERATURE TO COOL AND CURB FURTHER PLANT GROWTH!

IT'S OBVIOUS WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT!
CONSIDERING THE ATMOSPHERE, THERE NEEDS TO BE SOME TYPE OF ANIMAL LIFE TO MAINTAIN THIS MUCH VEGETATION!

BUT DOC! THERE WEREN'T ANY ANIMALS ON THIS PLANET BEFORE!
WHERE DID THEY SUDDENLY COME FROM!?

JUST THINK ABOUT IT....

THEY MUST'VE EVOLVED AFTER COMING INTO CONTACT WITH THE GENES OF FOREIGN FAUNA...!
IT'S THE SAME CASE AS WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PLANTS.

W-WHAT!?

IN TRYING TO IMITATE THE GENES OF HIGHER EVOLVED ANIMALS, THEY SEEM TO HAVE MADE SOME ERROR AND DIVERGED QUITE A BIT.
BUT IT'S FAULTY
MR. ROSHWALD, WAIT! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS TO GO OUT ALONE!
THERE'S NOTHING BUT DAMN MONSTERS ON THIS PLANET!
ドアアアアア!!

AGHH!

AGH!

MN

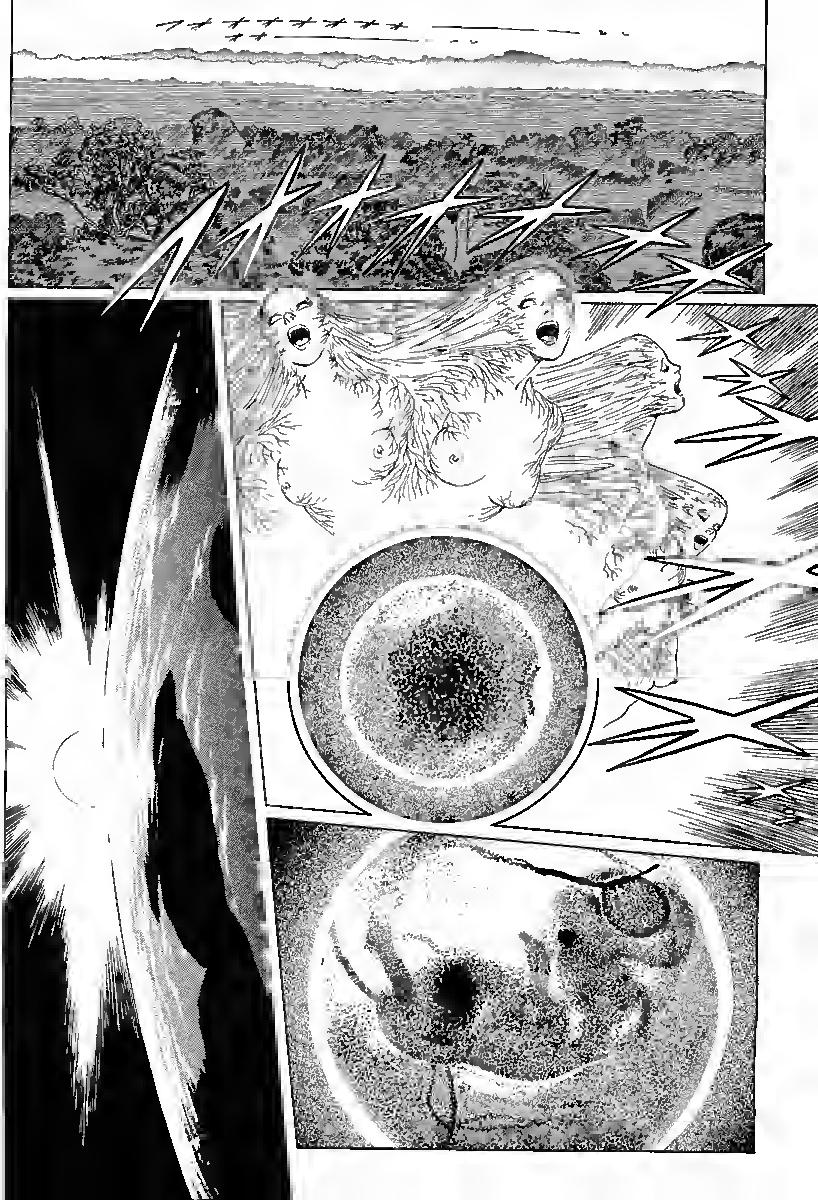
SHIT! NOTHING BUT STATIC!
BZZ...
DOC! BIGSAM! DO YOU RESPOND!?
ZZZ!
MR. ROSHWALD!
LOOK...
THIS IS THE SKULL BELONGING TO ONE OF THE CREW MEMBERS THAT DIED HERE 30 YEARS AGO...

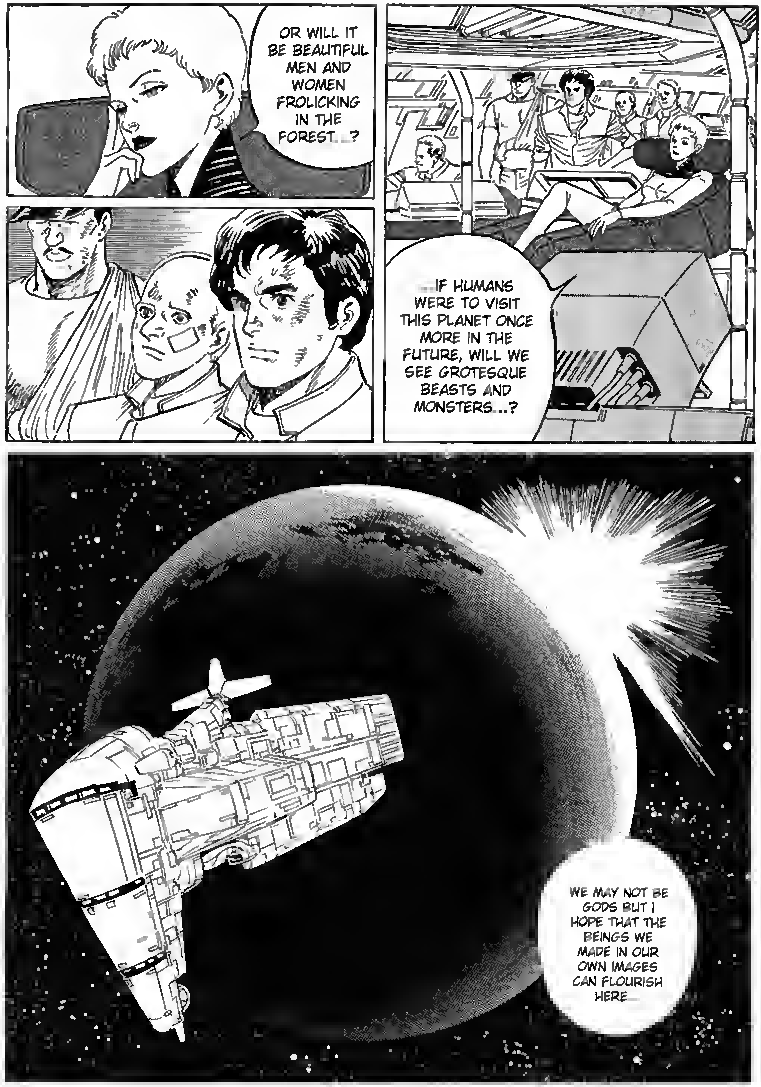
JUST WHAT'S THE MEANING OF ALL THIS!? DON'T TELL ME THE SHIP-WRECKED CREW...
MR. ROSHWALD! PLEASE LISTEN TO ME! MY CREW IS IN DANGER! AND THAT MONSTER FROM BEFORE HAD THE FACE OF A HUMAN FEMALE!
DID YOU KNOW? MORE THAN 50 YEARS AGO, THERE WAS A PROJECT CALLED "RECONNAISSANCE DISSEMINATION."
YOU MEAN... THOSE CLONED HUMANS!?
IT'S SAID THAT GOD MADE MAN AFTER HIS OWN IMAGE BUT...
WHEN WAS IT EXACTLY THAT HUMANS STARTED MAKING HUMANS IN THEIR OWN IMAGE...?
THEY WERE BORN FROM THE CELL TISSUES TAKEN FROM HEALTHY ASTRONAUTS AND PLACED IN A CULTIVATION CAPSULE.
AND DURING THE 20 OR SO YEARS IT TOOK TO REACH THE TARGET PLANET, THE CLONED HUMANS WOULD MATURE.
HUMANS WITHOUT A FAMILY NOR A PAST...
DISPOSABLE HUMANS THAT WOULD CAUSE NO PROBLEMS EVEN IF THEY WERE KILLED ON A DANGEROUS RECONNAISSANCE MISSION...

THE HUMANS THAT DONATED THEIR CELL TISSUE FOR THE PROJECT BEGAN SUFFERING FROM NIGHTMARES...
THE PROJECT WASN'T STOPPED JUST BECAUSE OF THAT.
BUT WASN'T THAT PROJECT STOPPED AFTER ONLY A SINGLE RUN DUE TO THE ETHICAL BASIS THAT CLONES ARE STILL HUMANS!?
LIKE TWINS WHO SEEM TO SHARE A SUPERNATURAL CONNECTION TO EACH OTHER.
THE SPIRITS OF THE CLONES TRAVELLED THROUGH SPACE AND CALLING OUT TO THEIR PARENTS...
ザーッザーッザ
DREAMS OF THE HARSH AND CRUEL LIVES OF THEIR CLONES THEIR FEARS, PAINS, AND EVEN DEATHS
MOST OF THE DONORS COMMITTED SUICIDE OR WENT INSANE
THERE WAS EVEN A MAN AMONG THEM WHO FELT SO GUILTY THAT HE DEVOTED HIS ENTIRE LIFE TO DEVELOPING RECONNAISSANCE ROBOTS

THEY'VE BEEN CALLING ME FOR THE PAST 30 YEARS...
MR. ROSHWALD! WHERE ARE YOU GOING!?
THE WOMEN WHO WERE REBORN FROM THE PRIMITIVE LIFE ON THIS PLANET...
THEY WANT MY BODY... THE ORIGINAL, COMPLETE SET OF GENES...
!
THE WOMEN - !?

YOU NEED MY GENES DON'T YOU? IN ORDER TO GIVE BIRTH TO PROPER ORGANISMS...
I'M HERE AT LAST, MY DAUGHTERS...
I-IS THIS... THE RECONNAISSANCE CREW...?
MY DAUGHTERS... WILL YOU ACCEPT THIS FRAIL OLD BODY CLOSE TO DEATH...?
NO STOP!

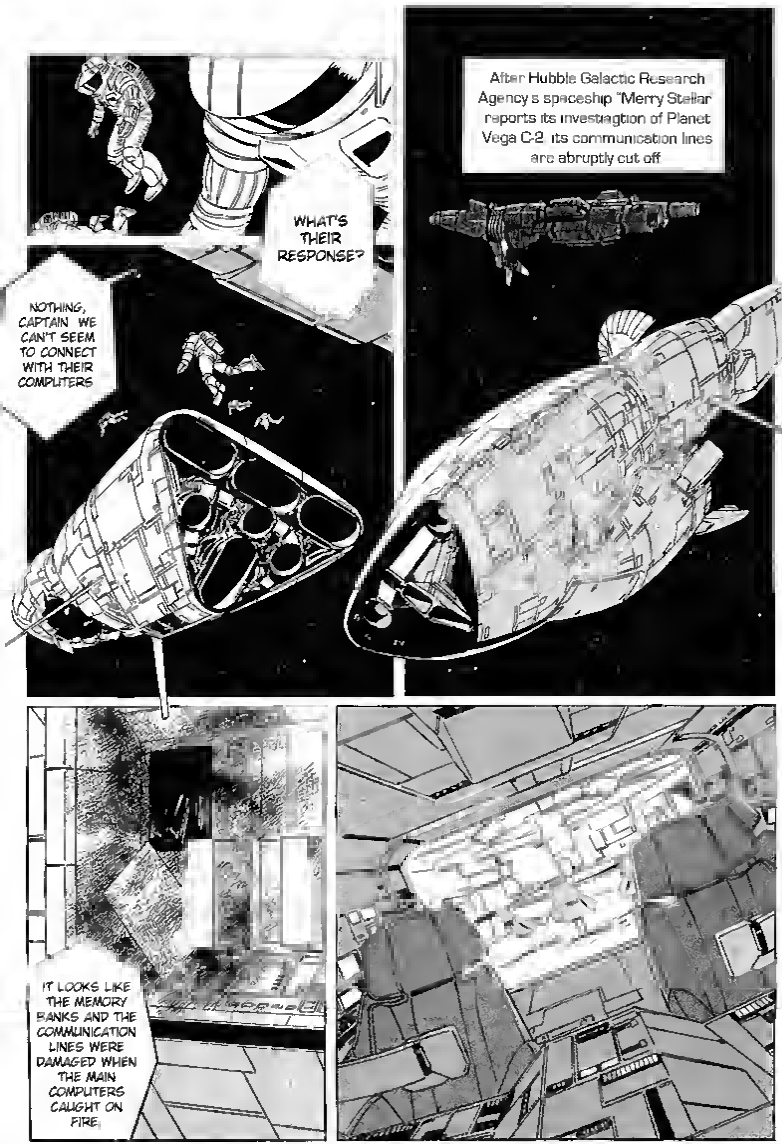


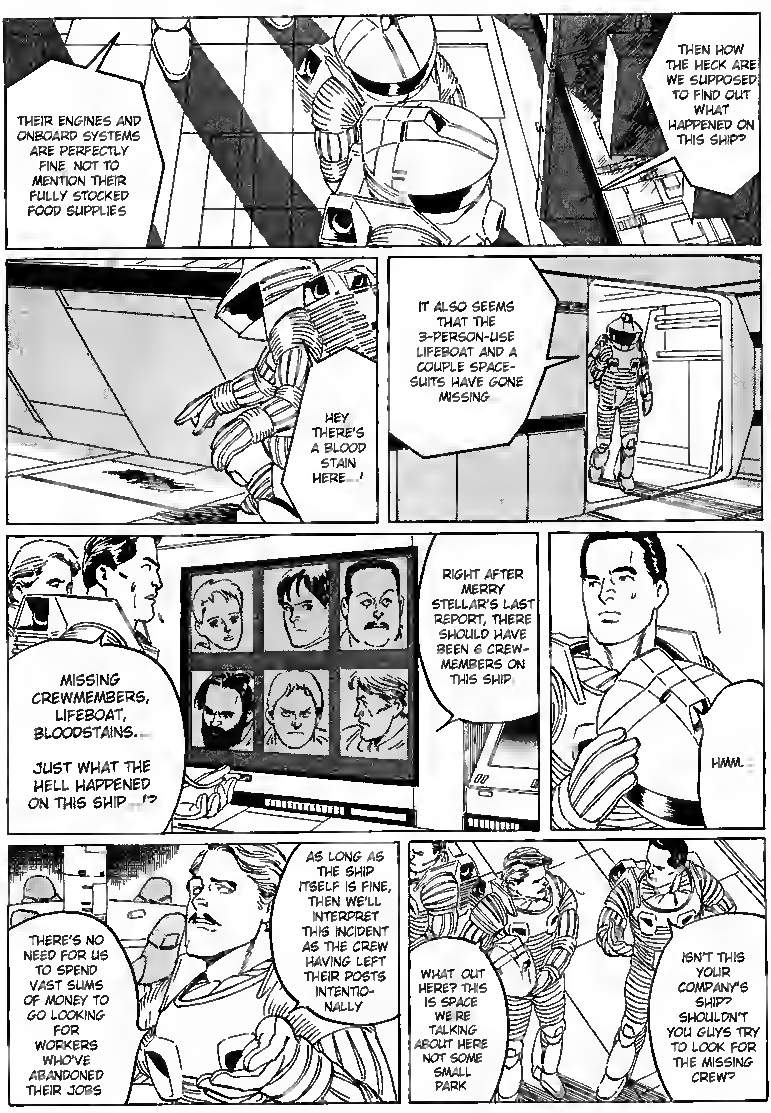

OR WILL IT BE BEAUTIFUL MEN AND WOMEN FROLICKING IN THE FOREST...?
...IF HUMANS WERE TO VISIT THIS PLANET ONCE MORE IN THE FUTURE, WILL WE SEE GROTESQUE BEASTS AND MONSTERS...?
WE MAY NOT BE GODS BUT I HOPE THAT THE BEINGS WE MADE IN OUR OWN IMAGES CAN FLOURISH HERE...

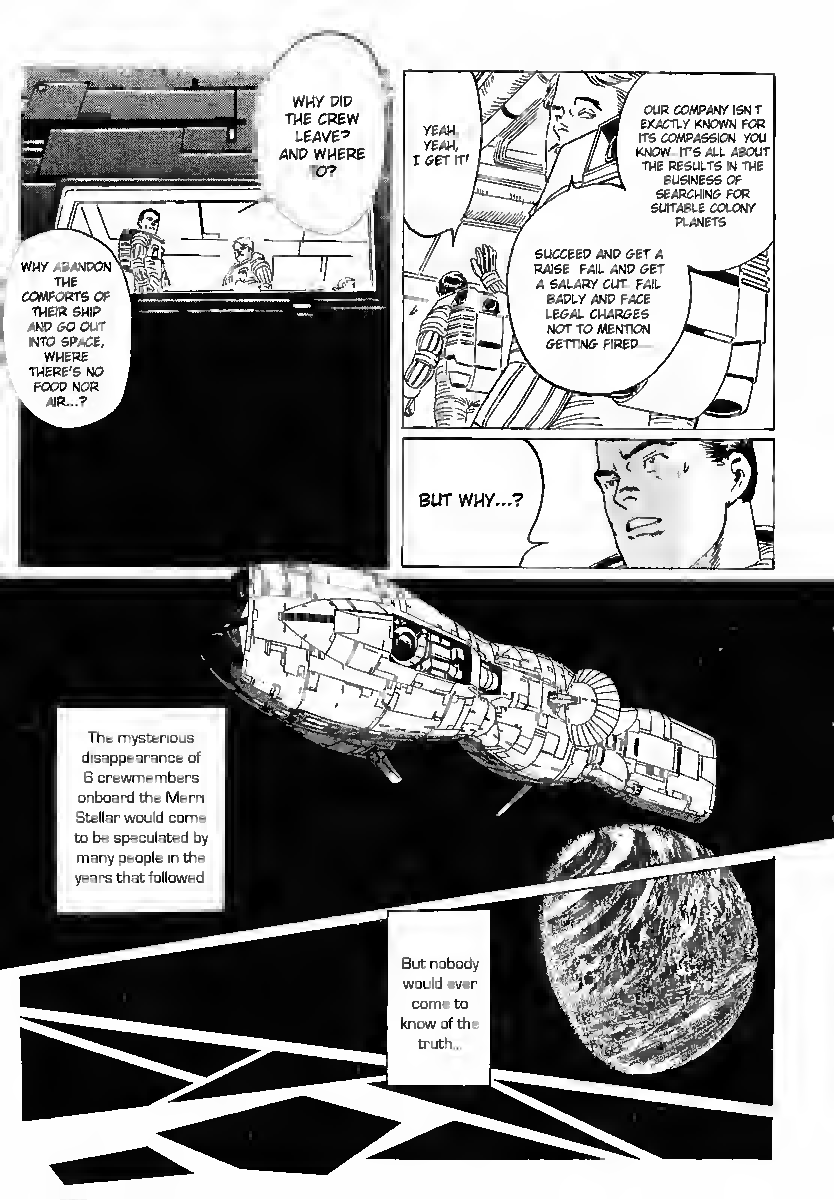
Star Dust Memories

スターダストメモリーズ

Vol.3 The Secret of Merry Stellar

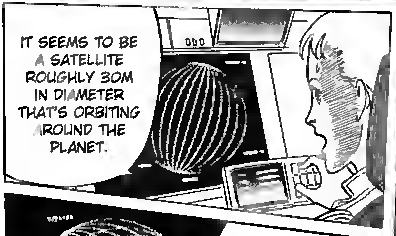

After Hubble Galactic Research Agency's spaceship "Merry Stellar" reports its investigation of Planet Vega C-2 its communication lines are abruptly cut off
WHAT'S THEIR RESPONSE?
NOTHING, CAPTAIN. WE CAN'T SEEM TO CONNECT WITH THEIR COMPUTERS
IT LOOKS LIKE THE MEMORY BANKS AND THE COMMUNICATION LINES WERE DAMAGED WHEN THE MAIN COMPUTERS CAUGHT ON FIRE.

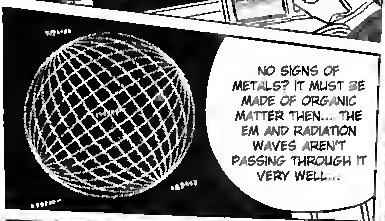

THEIR ENGINES AND ONBOARD SYSTEMS ARE PERFECTLY FINE NOT TO MENTION THEIR FULLY STOCKED FOOD SUPPLIES
THEN HOW THE HECK ARE WE SUPPOSED TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED ON THIS SHIP?
HEY THERE'S A BLOOD STAIN HERE...!
IT ALSO SEEMS THAT THE 3-PERSON-USE LIFEBOAT AND A COUPLE SPACE-SUITS HAVE GONE MISSING
MISSING CREWMEMBERS, LIFEBOAT, BLOODSTAINS... JUST WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED ON THIS SHIP...!?
RIGHT AFTER MERRY STELLAR'S LAST REPORT, THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN 6 CREW-MEMBERS ON THIS SHIP
HMM...
THERE'S NO NEED FOR US TO SPEND VAST SUMS OF MONEY TO GO LOOKING FOR WORKERS WHO'VE ABANDONED THEIR JOBS
AS LONG AS THE SHIP ITSELF IS FINE, THEN WE'LL INTERPRET THIS INCIDENT AS THE CREW HAVING LEFT THEIR POSTS INTENTIO-NALLY
WHAT OUT HERE? THIS IS SPACE WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HERE NOT SOME SMALL PARK
ISN'T THIS YOUR COMPANY'S SHIP? SHOULDN'T YOU GUYS TRY TO LOOK FOR THE MISSING CREW?


WHY DID THE CREW LEAVE? AND WHERE TO?
WHY ABANDON THE COMFORTS OF THEIR SHIP AND GO OUT INTO SPACE, WHERE THERE'S NO FOOD NOR AIR...?
YEAH, YEAH, I GET IT!
OUR COMPANY ISN'T EXACTLY KNOWN FOR ITS COMPASSION, YOU KNOW. IT'S ALL ABOUT THE RESULTS IN THE BUSINESS OF SEARCHING FOR SUITABLE COLONY PLANETS
SUCCEED AND GET A RAISE. FAIL AND GET A SALARY CUT. FAIL BADLY AND FACE LEGAL CHARGES NOT TO MENTION GETTING FIRED...
BUT WHY...?
The mysterious disappearance of 6 crewmembers onboard the Merri Stellar would come to be speculated by many people in the years that followed.
But nobody would ever come to know of the truth...

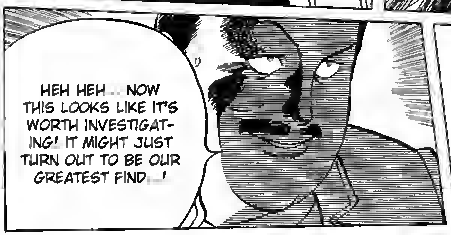
THIS IS CAPTAIN GASTON, REPORTING THE MERRY STELLAR CREW'S INVESTIGATION OF PLANET VEGA C-2 OVER
THE PLANET'S TEMPERATURE PROVED TO BE MUCH HIGHER THAN EXPECTED PRESUMABLY, ANY INDIGENOUS LIFE MUST HAVE WENT EXTINCT LONG AGO
DUE TO THE STORM, ONE OF OUR SHUTTLES CRASHLANDED ON THE PLANET, KILLING 2 OF OUR CREW-MEMBERS. THAT'S ALL FOR NOW, OVER.
DAMN IT! 2 PEOPLE DEAD AND ALL WE HAVE TO SHOW FOR IT IS KNOWING THAT THE PLANET'S NOTHING BUT A BLAZING HELLHOLE!
GUESS I CAN KISS THAT BONUS GOOD BYE!

IT'S ALL MY FAULT THAT THEY DIED...!
CHEER UP, KEITH.
IT'S CAPTAIN GASTON'S FAULT. OUR SYSTEMS WARNED HIM ABOUT THE ABNORMAL CLIMATE CHANGE.
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, KEITH.
IF I ONLY WENT OUT TO RESCUE THEM SOONER...
BUT I WAS TOO SCARED...
...WELL I FOR ONE AM GLAD YOU'RE ALIVE, KEITH.
I MEAN...
HE ALWAYS MANAGES TO WEASLE HIS WAY OUT OF THE ACCIDENTS HE CAUSED BUT THIS IS THE LAST STRAW!
IT'S BECAUSE OF HIS CARELESS ATTITUDE THAT WE'VE FACED SO MANY DANGEROUS SITUATIONS
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT, ZAGREB?


IT SEEMS TO BE A SATELLITE ROUGHLY 30M IN DIAMETER THAT'S ORBITING AROUND THE PLANET.


NO SIGNS OF METALS? IT MUST BE MADE OF ORGANIC MATTER THEN... THE EM AND RADIATION WAVES AREN'T PASSING THROUGH IT VERY WELL...

W-WHAT IS THAT, SHERRY!?

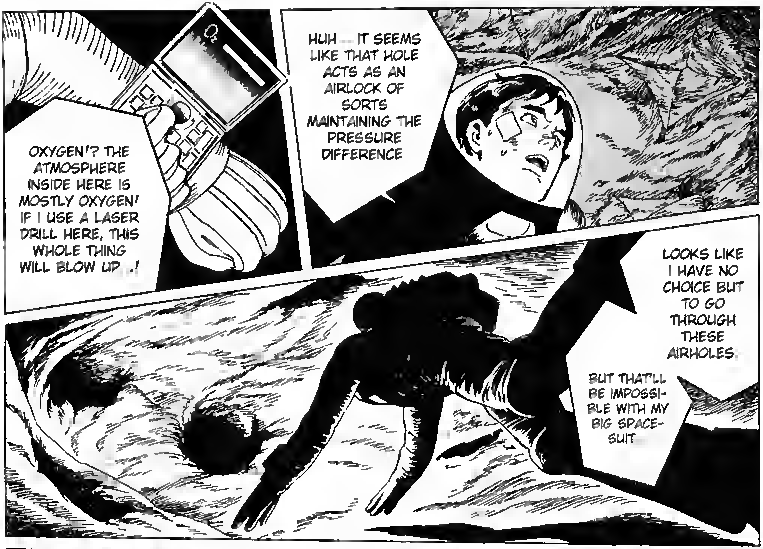

HEH HEH... NOW THIS LOOKS LIKE IT'S WORTH INVESTIGATING! IT MIGHT JUST TURN OUT TO BE OUR GREATEST FIND...!

IT'S ALMOST LIKE AN ARTIFICIAL SATELLITE!

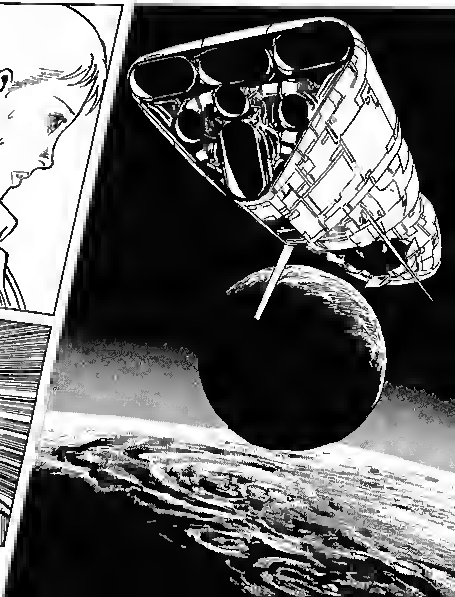
KEITH!?
I'LL FORGET ABOUT YOUR EARLIER MISTAKE WHEN I MAKE MY NEXT REPORT IF YOU FIND SOMETHING GOOD.
GOOD, GOOD!
ALLOW ME TO INVESTIGATE, CAPTAIN
SORRY, SHERRY BUT I THINK DOING THIS WILL MAKE ME FEEL A LITTLE BETTER ABOUT MYSELF
WAIT, KEITH! YOU HAVE NO IDEA JUST HOW DANGEROUS THIS COULD BE!

I-IF THIS REALLY TURNS OUT TO BE AN ARTIFICIAL SATELLITE THEN IT JUST MIGHT BE HUMANITY'S FIRST EVIDENCE OF INTELLIGENCE LIFE OUT IN SPACE!
DO YOU SEE ANYTHING ON THE SURFACE KEITH!? ZOOM IN WITH THE CAMERA!
.....
THAT AIN'T NO ORDINARY SATELLITE, THAT'S FOR SURE. JUST LOOK HOW PERFECTLY SPHERICAL IT IS EVEN WITH THAT SIZE
THERE APPEARS TO BE A SLIGHTLY TRANSPARENT SECTION... IT FEELS HARD LIKE A ROCK...
JET PRO-PULSION!? THEN...!
TRY PENETRATING THE SURFACE WITH YOUR LASER DRILL! I WANT TO SEE WHAT'S ON THE INSIDE!
THE INSIDE LOOKS WORN OUT...
IF IT'S A HOLE YOU WANT, THERE RE ALREADY PLENTY ON THE SURFACE. IT LOOKS LIKE A HOLE FOR JET PROPULSION OR SOMETHING...
KEITH! THAT'S ENOUGH, COME BACK!

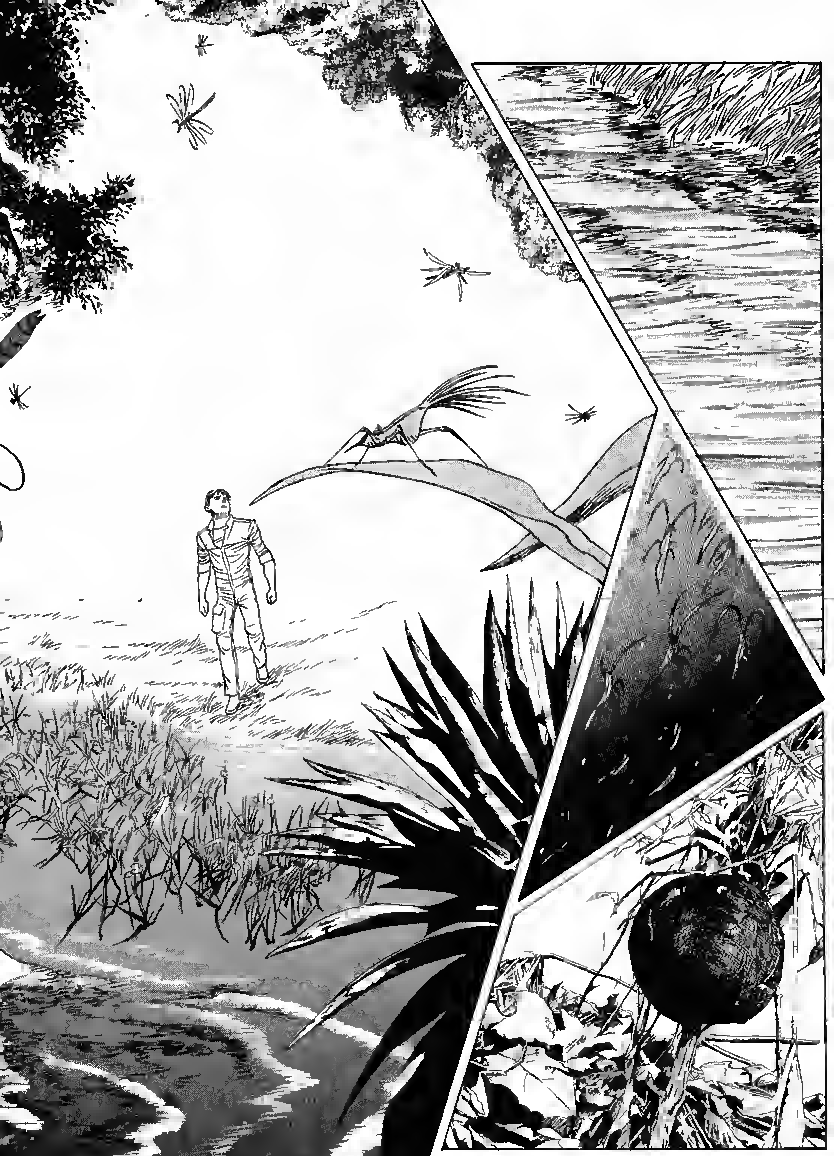
W-WHAT'S WRONG!?
THE EM WAVES CAN'T PENETRATE THAT THING VERY WELL! WE CAN'T CONNECT TO KEITH IF HE GOES FARTHER INSIDE!
WIND!? THERE'S SOME KIND OF HIGH PRESSURE VAPOUR COMING OUT THROUGH HERE...!


OXYGEN!? THE ATMOSPHERE INSIDE HERE IS MOSTLY OXYGEN! IF I USE A LASER DRILL HERE, THIS WHOLE THING WILL BLOW UP..!
HUH... IT SEEMS LIKE THAT HOLE ACTS AS AN AIRLOCK OF SORTS MAINTAINING THE PRESSURE DIFFERENCE
LOOKS LIKE I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO GO THROUGH THESE AIRHOLES.
BUT THAT'LL BE IMPOSSIBLE WITH MY BIG SPACE-SUIT...

WHAT'RE YOU DOING, KEITH! HURRY UP AND TELL US WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE!
KEITH...
GODDAMN IT, THAT SLOW SON OF A B...



SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR JOB!
AS SOON AS WE GET BACK TO BASE, WE'LL TELL THE HIGHER-UPS THAT YOUR IDIOTIC ACTIONS TOOK THE LIVES OF OUR 2 CREWMEMBERS!
Y-YOU DARE MUTINY AGAINST ME!?
THE REAL SON OF A BITCH HERE IS YOU, GASTON!
GASP
SPIT! SPIT! WHAT IS THIS, PLANT RESIN?
AHHH ...!?



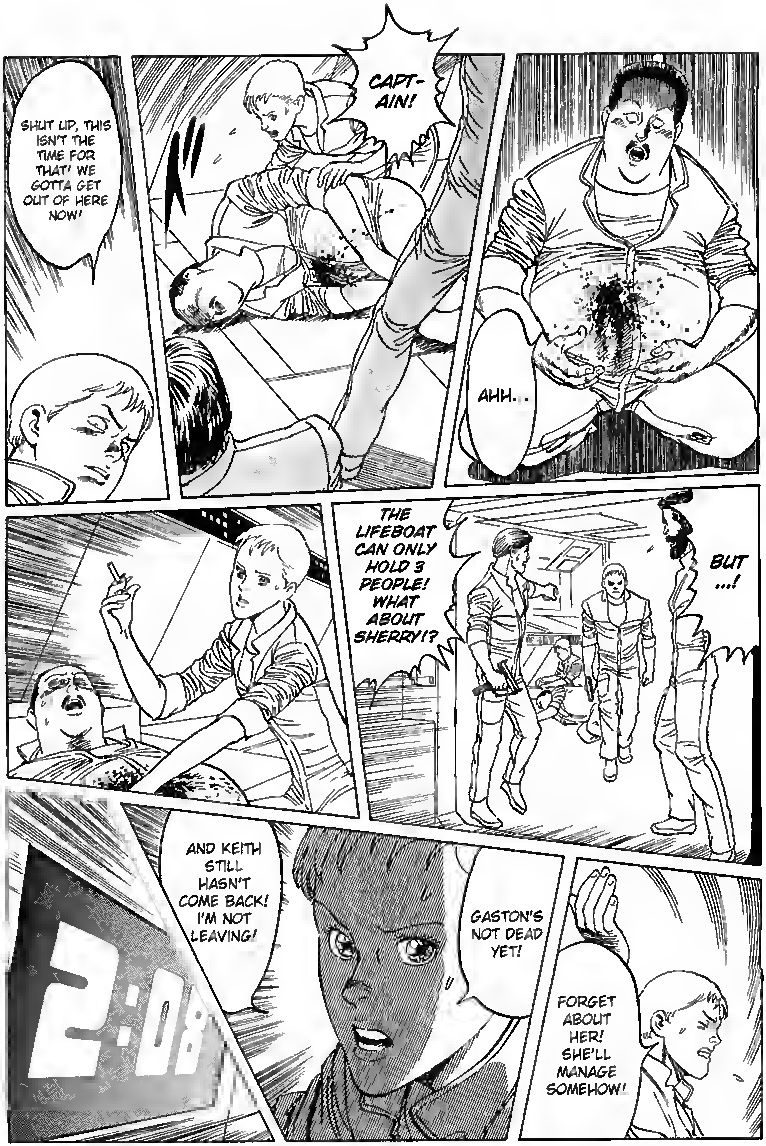
THE INNER WALLS ARE ALL ILLUMINATED... MUST BE DONE BY SOME KIND OF FIBER OPTICS.
THE LIGHT FEELS JUST LIKE SUNLIGHT. IT MUST BE THE HEAT SOURCE FOR THIS ECOSYSTEM...
THE ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY IS NATURALLY GENERATED FROM THE CENTRIFUGAL FORCE OF THE SPINNING SATELLITE AND THE PLANTS GROWING HERE MUST PROVIDE THE OXYGEN.

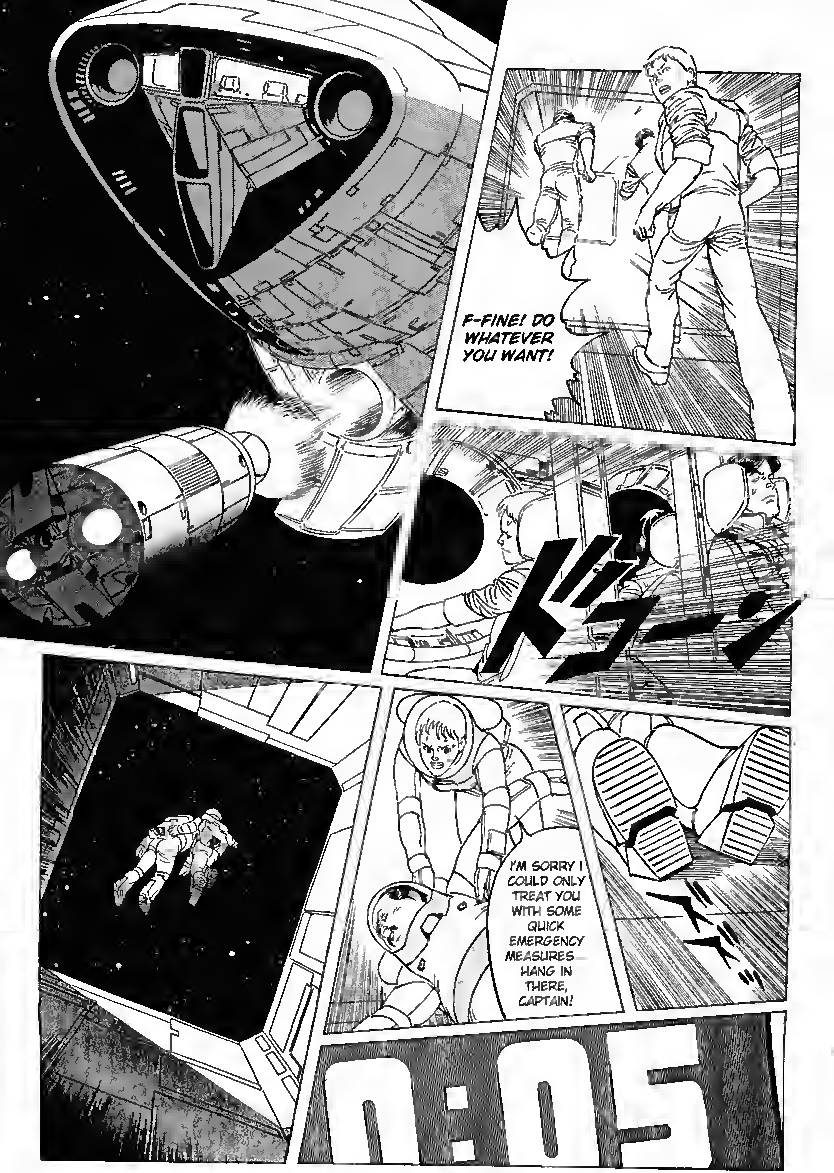
THIS WHOLE SATELLITE MUST BE AN ARTIFICIAL ECOSYSTEM OF SORTS, KEPT AIRTIGHT TO MAINTAIN THE LIFE AND ATMOSPHERE INSIDE...
AND I'LL BET THAT IT'S ALSO USED TO REGULATE THIS SATELLITE'S ORBIT.
BUT DUE TO THE LACK OF ANIMAL LIFE, THE OVER-ABUNDANT OXYGEN MUST BE SYSTEMATICALLY RELEASED OUTSIDE WITH THAT AIRHOLE.
HMM? WHAT'S THAT SUSPENSION OF FLOATING WATER...?
IT'S FULL OF DIFFERENT ANIMALS... THAT ONE LOOKS LIKE A PLANKTON.
IN OTHER WORDS, THE GENES OF ALL THE DIFFERENT ANIMALS MUST BE BEING CULTURED IN THERE...!
MAYBE IT'S SOME KIND OF STASIS THAT CULTIVATES ALL THE DIFFERENT ANIMAL FORMS...!

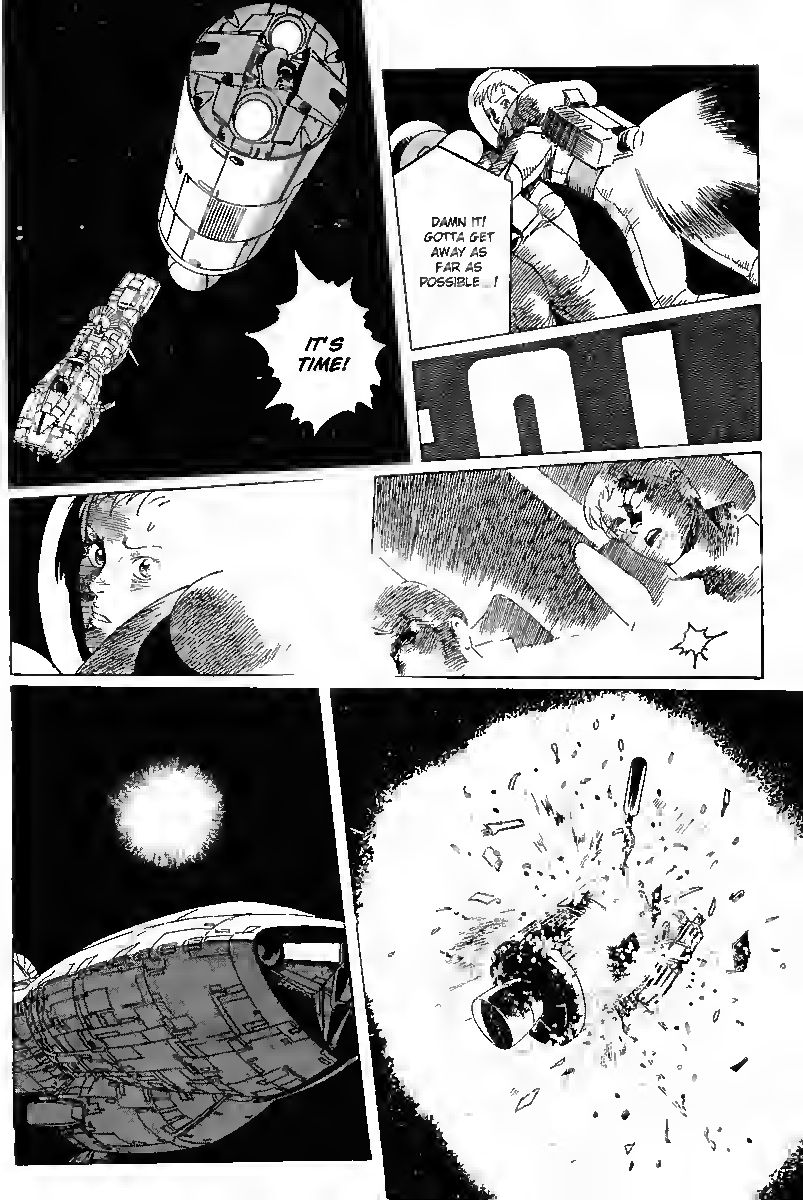
THEY MUST'VE BUILT THIS "LIVING SATELLITE" AND LAUNCHED IT INTO SPACE..!
THESE MUST BE THE LIFE FORMS THAT ONCE EXISTED ON PLANET VEGA C-2! I DON'T KNOW WHO OR HOW BUT WHEN THE PLANET'S CLIMATE BECAME INHABITABLE FOR LIFE,
L-LET'S JUST CALM DOWN! IF KEITH FINDS SOMETHING GOOD OUT THERE, THEN EVERYTHING'LL WORK OUT FOR US! WE'LL ALL GET BIG BONUSES!
THEN THAT BONUS IS OURS, NOT YOURS! I'LL BE DAMNED IF I SEE THE LIKES OF YOU GET REWARDED AFTER YOU GOT 2 OF MY FRIENDS KILLED!
OH IS THAT SO...?
HEY, SEND THE SHIP'S DATA OVER TO HEADQUARTERS RIGHT NOW! WE'LL USE IT TO PROVE HIS INEPTITUDE!
U!U!U!

AGH!!
ALERT
YOU BASTARD!
HAHAHA! TOO BAD BUT THE DATA'S BEEN WIPED OUT!
I'VE JUST ACTIVATED THE SHIP'S SELF-DESTRUCT SEQUENCE AND I'M THE ONLY ONE KNOWS THE STOP CODE!
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT TURN AGAINST ME SO I PLANNED AHEAD!
WHAT IS IT NOW!?
5:00

4:51
TELL ME THE CODE TO STOP THE SELF-DESTRUCT SEQUENCE!
T-THERE'S STILL THE EMERGENCY-USE LIFEBOAT! LET'S JUST USE THAT AND GET OUT OF HERE, ZAGREB!
YOU'RE BLUFFING! YOU DON'T HAVE THE GUTS!
YOU WILLING TO BET YOUR LIFE ON THAT?
AS IF I COULD TRUST YOU!
.....!!
OH I WILL IF YOU HAND OVER YOUR WEAPONS AND SURRENDER.

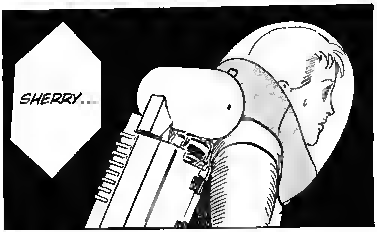

SHUT UP, THIS ISN'T THE TIME FOR THAT! WE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE NOW!
CAPT-AIN!
AHH..
BUT ...!
THE LIFEBOAT CAN ONLY HOLD 3 PEOPLE! WHAT ABOUT SHERRY!?
FORGET ABOUT HER! SHE'LL MANAGE SOMEHOW!
GASTON'S NOT DEAD YET!
AND KEITH STILL HASN'T COME BACK! I'M NOT LEAVING!
2:08


F-FINE! DO WHATEVER YOU WANT!
ドーン
I'M SORRY I COULD ONLY TREAT YOU WITH SOME QUICK EMERGENCY MEASURES... HANG IN THERE, CAPTAIN!
ドドド
0:05


IT'S TIME!
DAMN IT! GOTTA GET AWAY AS FAR AS POSSIBLE...!

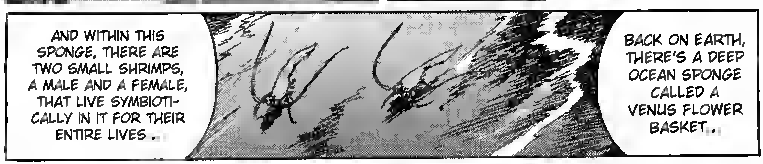
AHA! HAHAHA.
AH...
T-THE LIFEBOAT EXPLODED ...!?
HAHAHA! SERVES YOU RIGHT, YOU IDIOTS!
W-WHEN DID THE SHIP GET SO FAR AWAY!?
NO! I HAVE TO GET BACK TO MERRY STELL...
WAIT... THE SHIP!
AR...

EVERYONE'S ALL GONE...


SHERRY...

KEITH!?

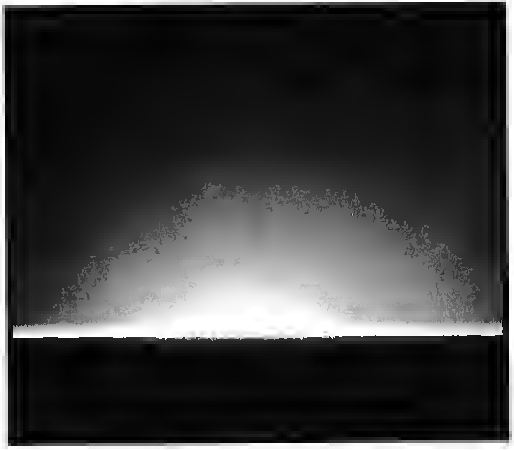
SHERRY, CAN YOU HEAR ME?


AND WITHIN THIS SPONGE, THERE ARE TWO SMALL SHRIMPS, A MALE AND A FEMALE, THAT LIVE SYMBIOTICALLY IN IT FOR THEIR ENTIRE LIVES...
BACK ON EARTH, THERE'S A DEEP OCEAN SPONGE CALLED A VENUS FLOWER BASKET...

WHETHER THIS IS A BLESSING OR A CURSE...
WE TOO, NOW HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO LIVE LIKE THEM.

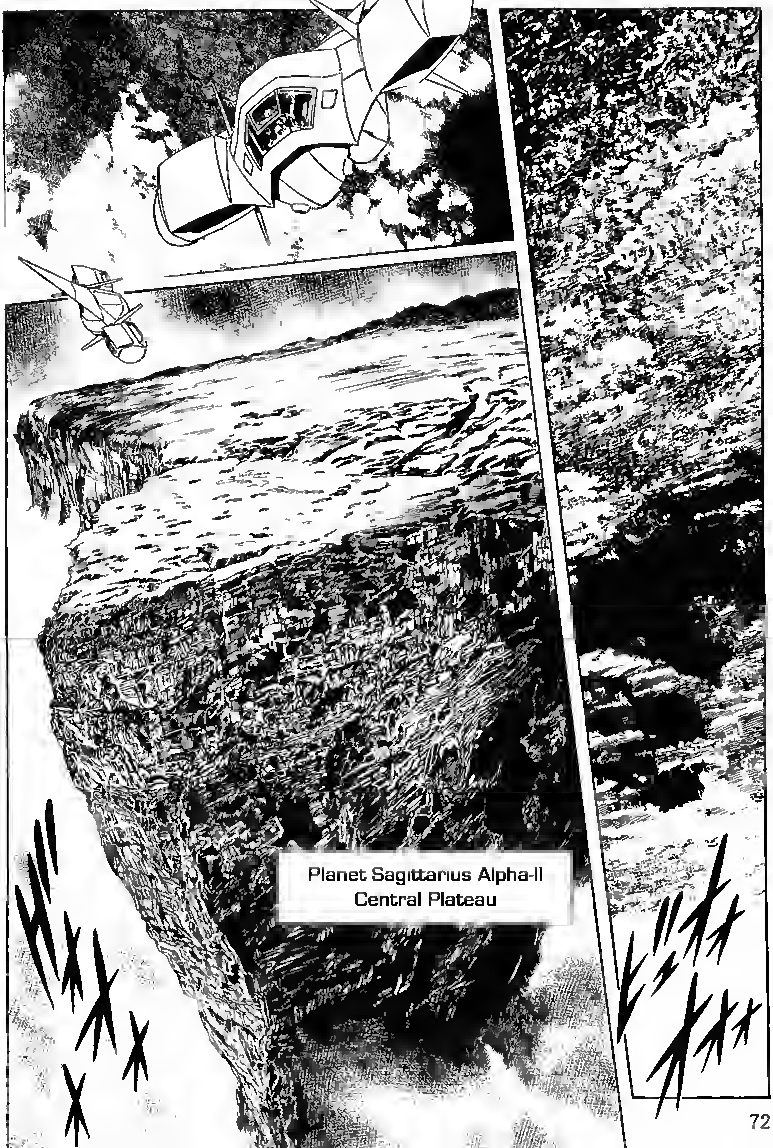
WHO KNOWS JUST WHEN WILL THIS SATELLITE CAN RETURN TO ITS PLANET...

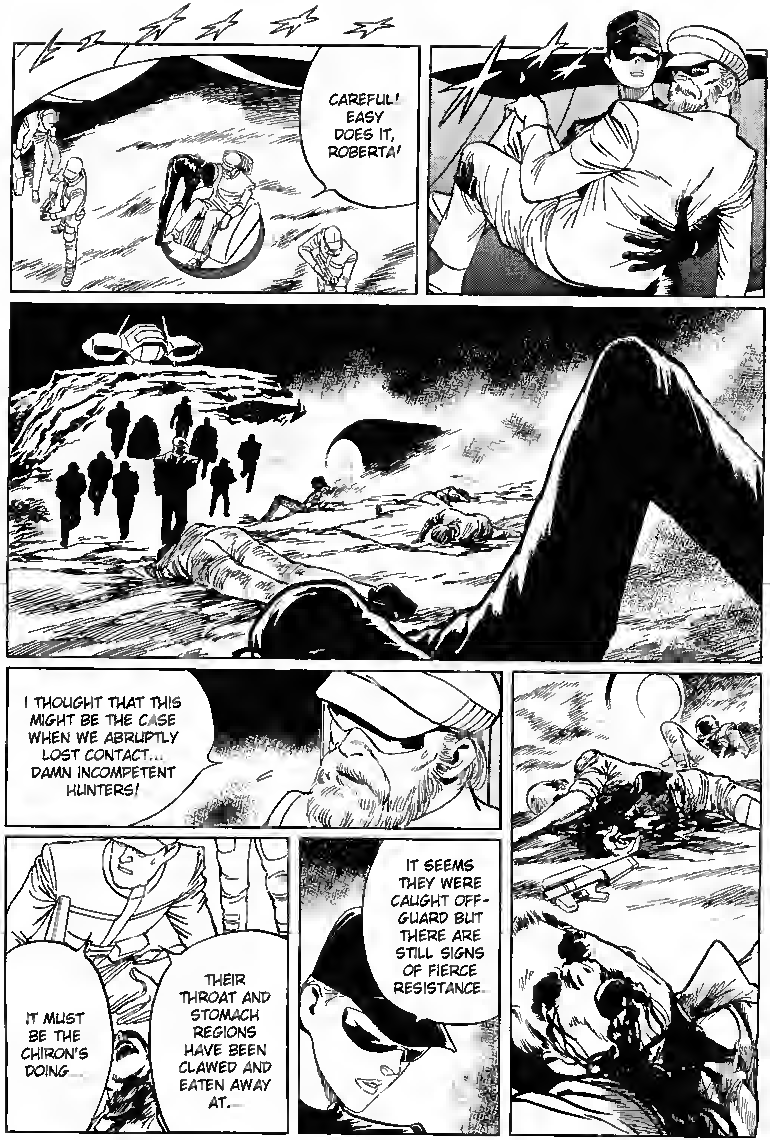
Star Dust Memories



スターダストメモリーズ

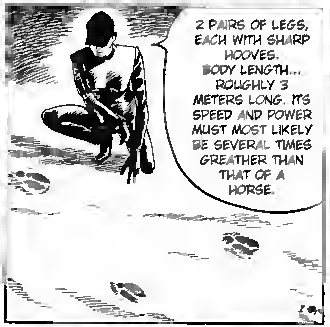
Vol.4 The Centaur of Sagittarius

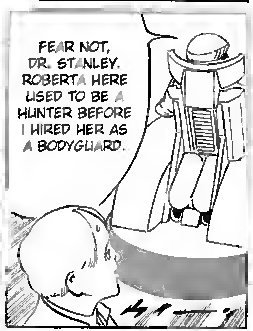

Planet Sagittarius Alpha-II
Central Plateau

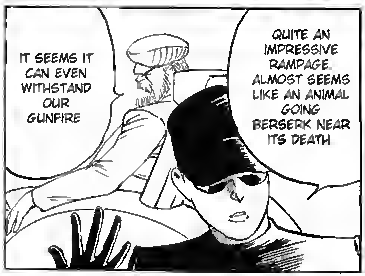

CAREFUL! EASY DOES IT, ROBERTA!
I THOUGHT THAT THIS MIGHT BE THE CASE WHEN WE ABRUPTLY LOST CONTACT... DAMN INCOMPETENT HUNTERS!
IT SEEMS THEY WERE CAUGHT OFF-GUARD BUT THERE ARE STILL SIGNS OF FIERCE RESISTANCE.
THEIR THROAT AND STOMACH REGIONS HAVE BEEN CLAWED AND EATEN AWAY AT...
IT MUST BE THE CHIRON'S DOING...

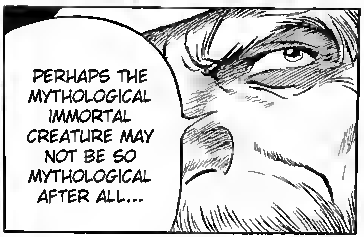
THAT WAY, WE WON'T NEED TO PAY WORKER'S COMPENSATION TO THE BEREAVED FAMILIES
YES, CHIEF
DISPOSE OF THE BODIES ACCORDINGLY AND MARK THEIR STATUS DOWN AS MISSING
HEY, THERE'S SOMETHING HERE!
GICHI
GICHI
IT LOOKS LIKE A LARGE AMPHIBIAN CREATURE... IT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN STRUCK BY STRAY BULLETS BUT... WHY DOES IT ALSO LOOK LIKE ITS LOWER ABDOMEN WAS HALF EATEN...?
TELL THE MOTHER SHIP TO STOP BY HERE FOR A SHORT WHILE. IF THE HUNTERS ARE USELESS, THEN WE'LL JUST HAVE TO CATCH IT OURSELVES!
WHO CARES ABOUT THAT? THOSE FELLOW FRIENDS OF HIS WERE PROBABLY FEEDING ON ITS CORPSE OR SOMETHING.

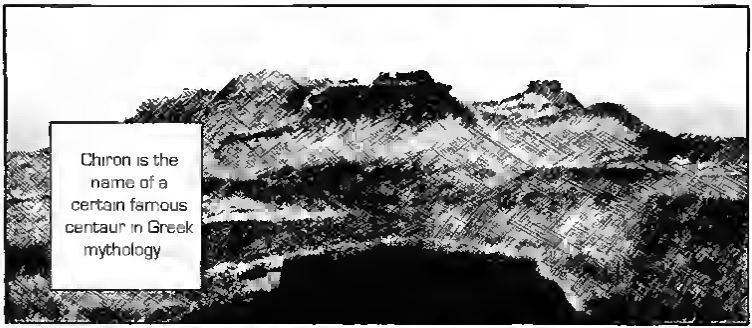
T-THIS IS MUCH TOO DANGEROUS, MR GOLDLIGHT. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOUR ARMED GUARDS BUT I'M JUST A SIMPLE SCIENTIST! I DON'T KNOW HOW TO SHOOT A GUN!
SET UP THE CAMPS AND START CLEANING UP THE CORPSES!


2 PAIRS OF LEGS, EACH WITH SHARP HOOVES. BODY LENGTH... ROUGHLY 3 METERS LONG. ITS SPEED AND POWER MUST MOST LIKELY BE SEVERAL TIMES GREATHER THAN THAT OF A HORSE.

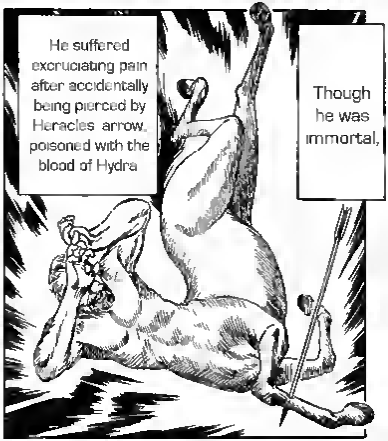

FEAR NOT, DR. STANLEY. ROBERTA HERE USED TO BE A HUNTER BEFORE I HIRED HER AS A BODYGUARD.

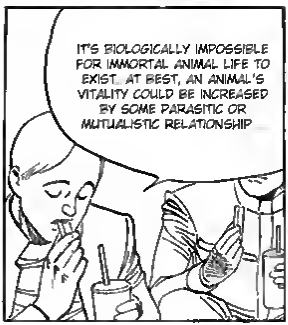

IT SEEMS IT CAN EVEN WITHSTAND OUR GUNFIRE
QUITE AN IMPRESSIVE RAMPAGE. ALMOST SEEMS LIKE AN ANIMAL GOING BERSERK NEAR ITS DEATH

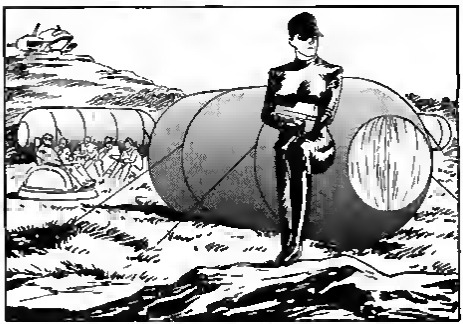

PERHAPS THE MYTHOLOGICAL IMMORTAL CREATURE MAY NOT BE SO MYTHOLOGICAL AFTER ALL...


Chiron is the name of a certain famous centaur in Greek mythology

After his death he was honoured with a place in the sky the Sagittarius constellation Considering that the centaur-like beasts were found on planet Alpha-II of Sagittarius it was only fitting that the beasts were named Chiron
Rather than painfully living eternally he chose death but not before bestowing his immortality on Prometheus


He suffered excruciating pain after accidentally being pierced by Heracles arrow, poisoned with the blood of Hydra
Though he was immortal,


IT'S BIOLOGICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR IMMORTAL ANIMAL LIFE TO EXIST. AT BEST, AN ANIMAL'S VITALITY COULD BE INCREASED BY SOME PARASITIC OR MUTUALISTIC RELATIONSHIP



WHETHER IT'S A BACTERIA OR VIRUS, EVEN A PARASITE WOULDN'T WANT TO HARM ITS HOST TOO MUCH AND KILL THEM.
SO IT MIGHT NOT BE FARFETCHED TO THINK OF SOME PARASITE THAT PURPOSELY PROLONGS THE LIFE OF ITS HOST TO MAXIMIZE ITS BENEFIT.
PARASITE? YOU MEAN TO SAY A PARASITE CAN TURN A MAN IMMORTAL!?
PERHAPS IMMORTALITY IS IMPOSSIBLE AS YOU SAY, BUT THERE MUST BE A WAY TO INCREASE THE VITALITY AND LIFESPAN OF HUMANS!
HMM... IN ANY CASE, WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS IF WE CAN MAKE USE OF THE CHIRON OR NOT!
ゴゴゴ
ゴボボ
NOW HURRY UP AND GET TO WORK! I WANT THAT CHIRON CAUGHT!
IF YOU SUCCEED, I'LL ENSURE YOU SUCCESS AND WEALTH UNDER THE GOLDLIGHT KONZERN! FAIL AND PREPARE FOR A LIFE OUT IN THE SHADOWS!

W-WHAT WAS THAT SOUND!?
SO THAT'S THE CHIRON'S HOWL...
DAMN, IT'S TOO FAR FOR THE INFRA-RED GOGGLES OR BIO-RADARS TO WORK...
AN EERIE WAIL THAT ONLY MAKES ME RECALL ILL THINGS..
LIKE WHAT?

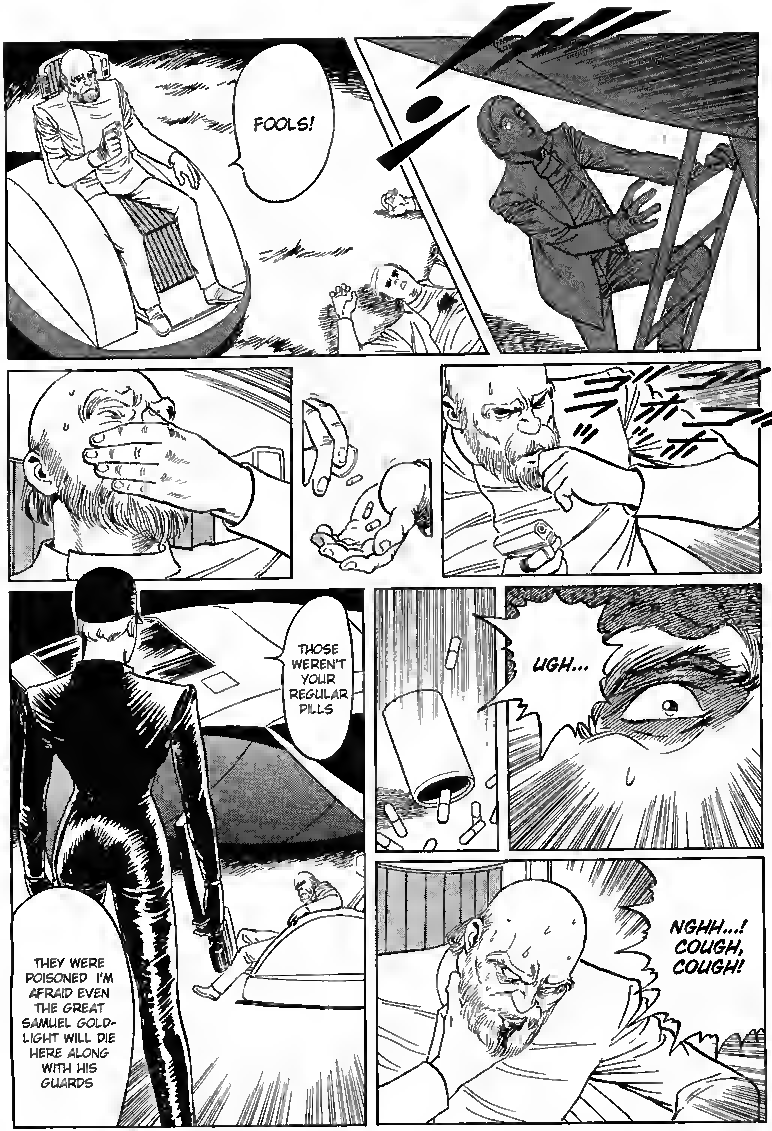
ALTHOUGH I CAN'T RECALL EVERY SINGLE MAN AND WOMAN I'VE CRUSHED ALONG MY WAY TO THE TOP, I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN THEIR ANGUISH..
AT ONE POINT IN MY LIFE, I DID EVERYTHING I COULD TO BUILD UP MY NOW-ENORMOUS CORPORATION. NO METHOD WAS TOO FORCEFUL AND I'VE LONG LOST COUNT OF ALL THE ENEMIES I'VE MADE.
BUT I CAN'T DIE JUST YET! I WON'T!
IN MY OLD AGE CLOSE TO DEATH'S DOORS, I CAN FEEL IT EVEN STRONGER THAN EVER...
IF THE CHIRON'S IMMORTALITY IS REAL THEN I SHALL SEIZE IT TO ETERNALLY RULE OVER MY EMPIRE!
AS IF I COULD EVER ALLOW SUCH A THING!
IF I DIE NOW, MY TALENTLESS SONS WILL RUIN THE VERY EMPIRE I'VE DEVOTED MY ENTIRE LIFE IN CREATING!

GICHI
GICHI
GET AWAY FROM ME! I AIN'T GIVING YOU ANY SCRAPS TO EAT!
AAA
AH... EXCUSE ME...
MR. GOLD-LIGHT, PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AT...
I'VE NEVER SEEN A CREATURE LIKE THIS BEFORE!
I DISSECTED THIS CREATURE I FOUND NEARBY HERE YESTER-DAY AND.. !
WHAT IS IT THIS EARLY IN THE MORNING!?

THIS IS AN IMPOSSIBLE CREATURE! I CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO FATHOM HOW THIS THING MANAGES TO LIVE!
IT HAS FOUR INCREDIBLY TOUGH LEGS BUT MOST OF ITS BRAIN AND NERVOUS SYSTEM IS MISSING! NOT ONLY THAT, IT EVEN LACKS MOST OF THE DIGESTIVE ORGANS IT WOULD NEED TO SURVIVE!
DR. STANLEY! I'M NOT SPENDING VAST SUMS OF MONEY FOR YOU TO CONCERN YOURSELF WITH THESE INSIGNIFICANT CREATURES!
AH!
.....

I'VE HAD ENOUGH! WE'LL LURE OUT THAT CHIRON AND CATCH IT TODAY ONCE AND FOR ALL!
THE WIRE HAS BEEN SET UP AROUND THE CAMPS TO EXPLODE AND SET OFF A FLARE SIGNAL WHEN TRIPPED. THE PLAN IS TO QUICKLY SHOOT IT WITH THE TRANQUILIZER GUNS ONCE IT SETS OFF THE SIGNAL, GOT IT?
UNDER-STOOD!

THE TRAN-QUILIZER GUNS WON'T WORK!?
AGHHH!
H-HELP!
WHAT!? T-THAT'S THE AMPHIBIAN FROM LAST NIGHT!


FOOLS!
HGH...
NGHH...! COUGH, COUGH!
THOSE WEREN'T YOUR REGULAR PILLS
THEY WERE POISONED I'M AFRAID EVEN THE GREAT SAMUEL GOLDLIGHT WILL DIE HERE ALONG WITH HIS GUARDS

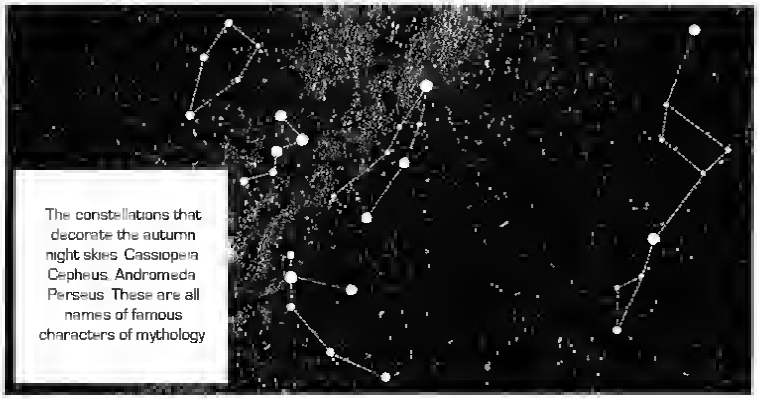
NOW DIE!
.....
!!
I WAS ONE OF THE MANY YOU CRUSHED ALONG YOUR WAY TO THE TOP. YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT MY FAMILY AND I HAD TO ENDURE BECAUSE OF YOU.... NOR DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW LONG I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT.
R... ROBERTA!? WHY...!?
AHHH!

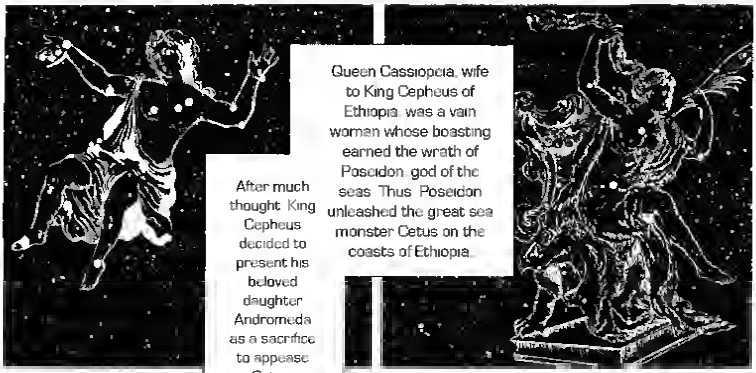
ギャ
NGHH...

AHHHHH!

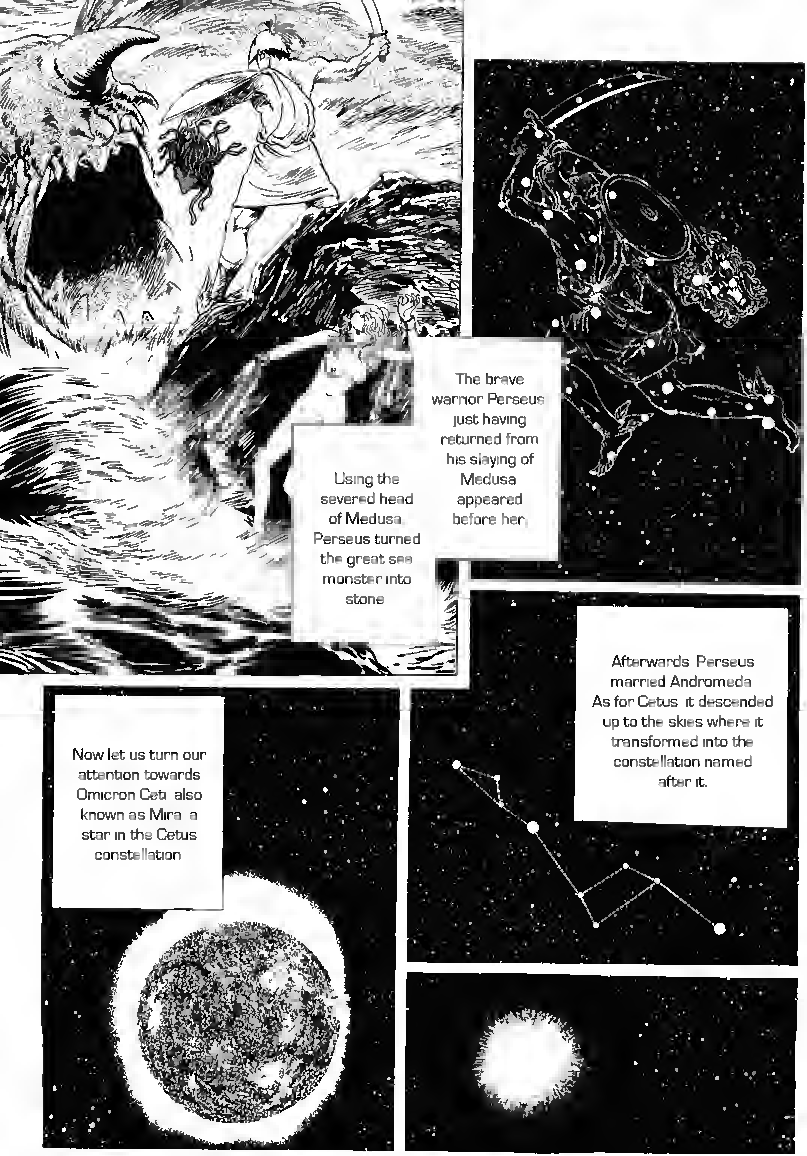
On the planet Sagittarius Alpha-II lives a centaur-like beast...
An immortal and violent phantom beast. However its cry reminds one of a human wail...
As if eternally suffering a most excruciating pain...

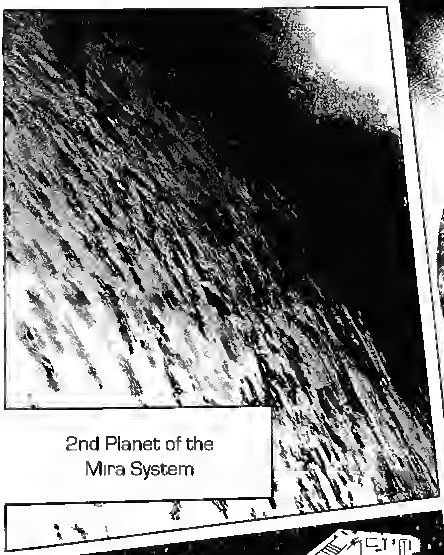
スターダストメモリーズ
Vol.5 The Sea of Cetus


The constellations that decorate the autumn night skies: Cassiopeia Cepheus, Andromeda Perseus. These are all names of famous characters of mythology


Queen Cassiopeia, wife to King Cepheus of Ethiopia, was a vain woman whose boasting earned the wrath of Poseidon, god of the seas. Thus, Poseidon unleashed the great sea monster Cetus on the coasts of Ethiopia..
After much thought, King Cepheus decided to present his beloved daughter Andromeda as a sacrifice to appease Cetus

And so Andromeda was chained naked to a reef when


The brave warrior Perseus just having returned from his slaying of Medusa appeared before her.
Using the severed head of Medusa Perseus turned the great sea monster into stone
Afterwards Perseus married Andromeda As for Cetus it descended up to the skies where it transformed into the constellation named after it.
Now let us turn our attention towards Omicron Ceti also known as Mira a star in the Cetus constellation


2nd Planet of the
Mira System

LOOK! IT'S THE PROMISED LAND AS FORETOLD BY OUR GOD, AMMON!
AFTER 40 YEARS AND 40 DAYS OF WANDERING, WE HAVE FINALLY ARRIVED!
FERTILE LANDS AND BOUNTIFUL SEAS AWAIT US THERE!
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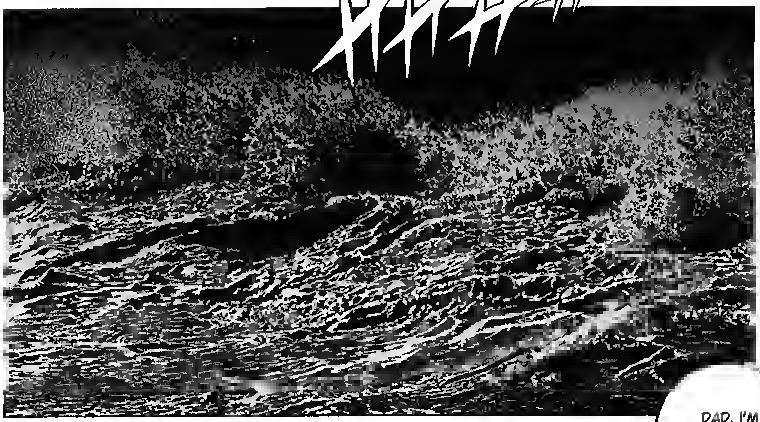
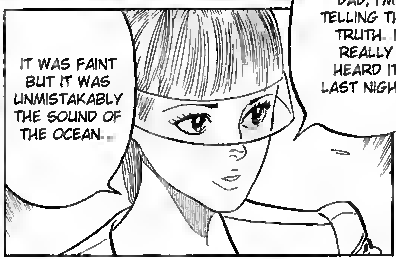
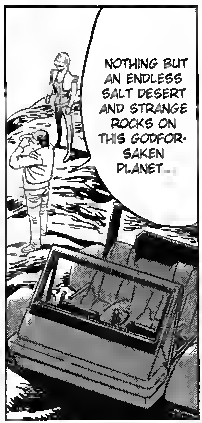
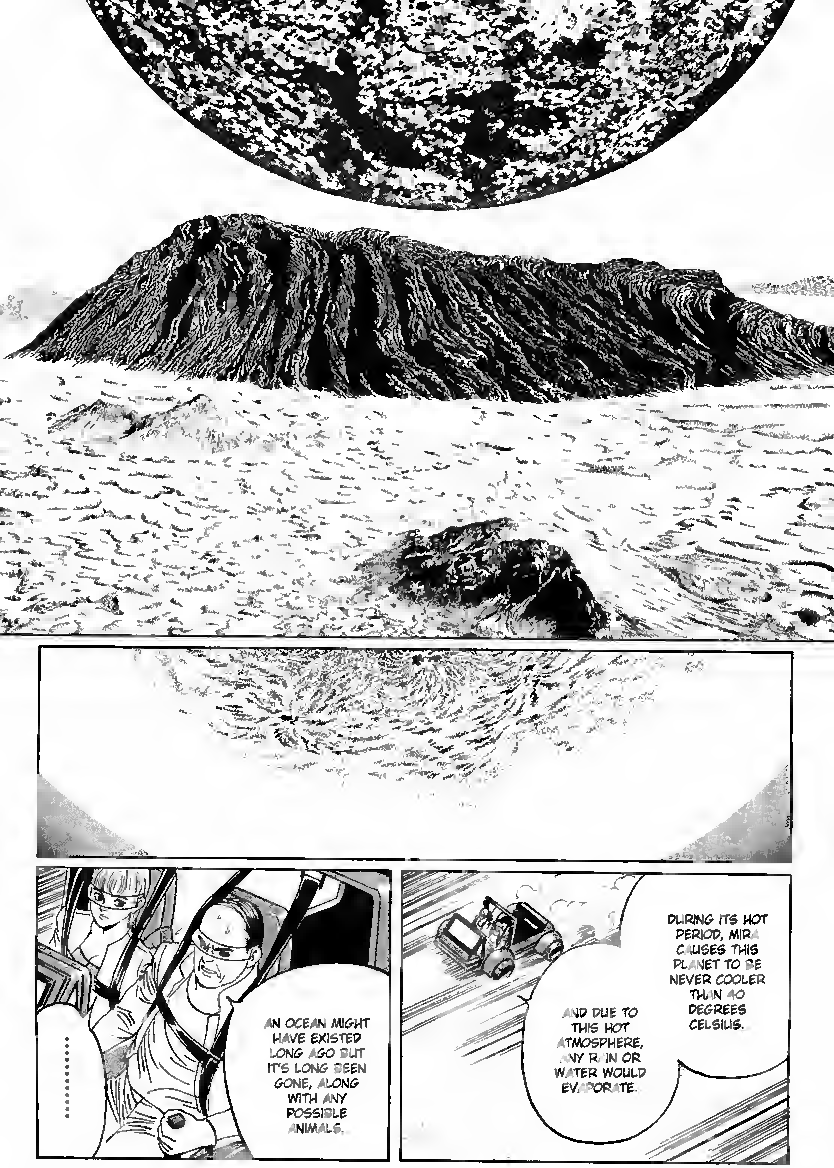
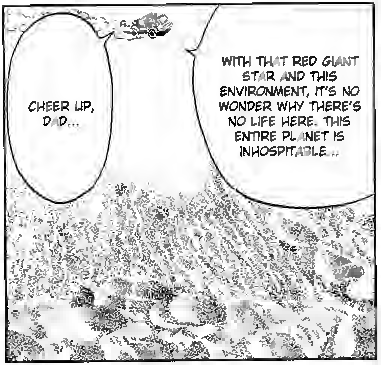

HHHHH


DAD, I'M TELLING THE TRUTH. I REALLY HEARD IT LAST NIGHT.
IT WAS FAINT BUT IT WAS UNMISTAKABLY THE SOUND OF THE OCEAN...

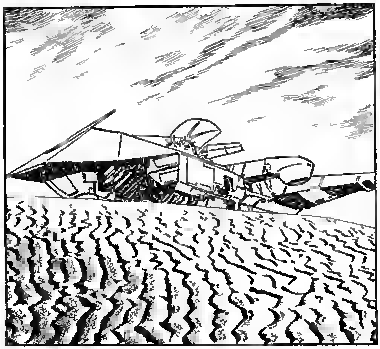

NOTHING BUT AN ENDLESS SALT DESERT AND STRANGE ROCKS ON THIS GODFORSAKEN PLANET...

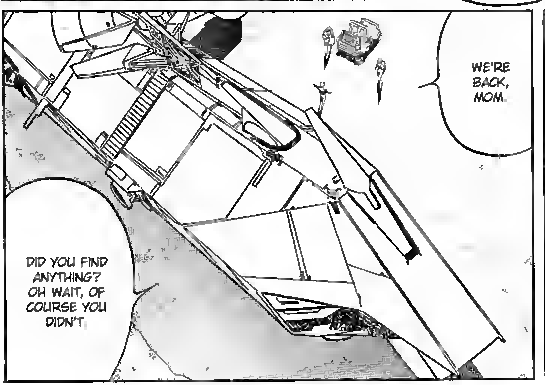
YOU MUST'VE BEEN DREAMING OR HEARING THINGS, AND THERE'S NO OCEAN HERE NOR ANYWHERE

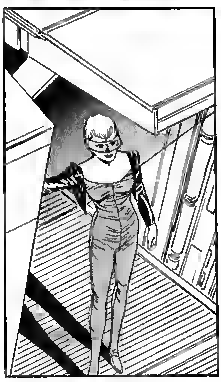

AN OCEAN MIGHT HAVE EXISTED LONG AGO BUT IT'S LONG BEEN GONE, ALONG WITH ANY POSSIBLE ANIMALS.
.....
AND DUE TO THIS HOT ATMOSPHERE, ANY RAIN OR WATER WOULD EVAPORATE.
DURING ITS HOT PERIOD, MIRA CAUSES THIS PLANET TO BE NEVER COOLER THAN 40 DEGREES CELSIUS.

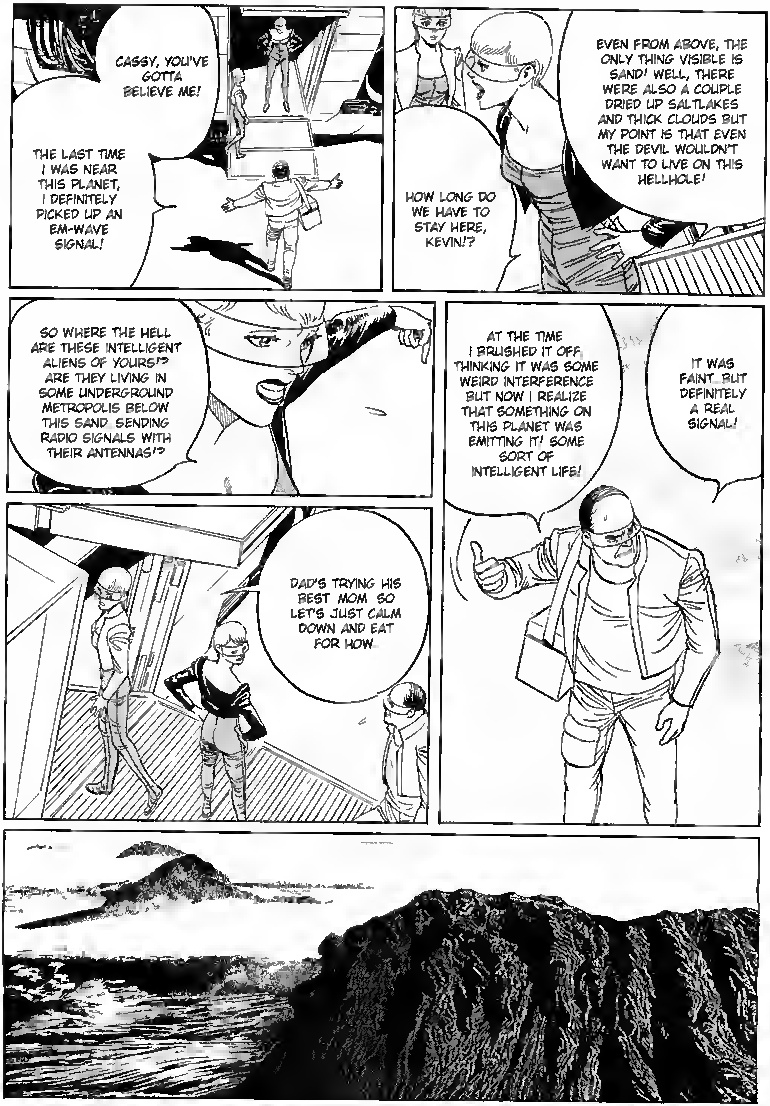

CHEER UP, DAD...
WITH THAT RED GIANT STAR AND THIS ENVIRONMENT, IT'S NO WONDER WHY THERE'S NO LIFE HERE. THIS ENTIRE PLANET IS INHOSPITABLE...

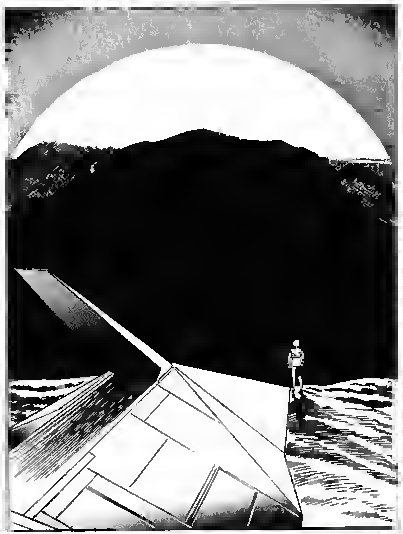
LONG AGO AN ASTRONOMER GAVE MIRA ITS NAME MEANING "ASTONISHING" AFTER NOTICING ITS BRIGHTNESS CAN RADICALLY CHANGE OVER TIME. IT'S NOW KNOWN AS A TYPE OF VARIABLE STAR.
IT TURNS OUT THAT MIRA'S THERMAL PULSES ARE THE CAUSES OF ITS VARIABLE TEMPERATURE AND BRIGHTNESS. COMPARED TO THE SUN, IT CAN BECOME 1500 TIMES BRIGHER AND SWELL UP TO 500 TIMES IN DIAMETER.



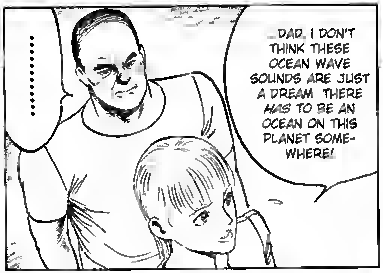

WE'RE BACK, MOM.
DID YOU FIND ANYTHING? OH WAIT, OF COURSE YOU DIDN'T.

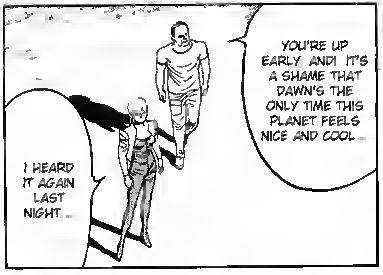


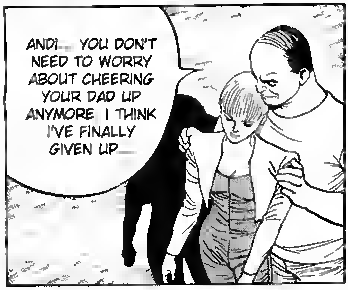

CASSY, YOU'VE GOTTA BELIEVE ME!
THE LAST TIME I WAS NEAR THIS PLANET, I DEFINITELY PICKED UP AN EM-WAVE SIGNAL!
EVEN FROM ABOVE, THE ONLY THING VISIBLE IS SAND! WELL, THERE WERE ALSO A COUPLE DRIED UP SALTLAKES AND THICK CLOUDS. BUT MY POINT IS THAT EVEN THE DEVIL WOULDN'T WANT TO LIVE ON THIS HELLHOLE!
HOW LONG DO WE HAVE TO STAY HERE, KEVIN!?
SO WHERE THE HELL ARE THESE INTELLIGENT ALIENS OF YOURS!? ARE THEY LIVING IN SOME UNDERGROUND METROPOLIS BELOW THIS SAND, SENDING RADIO SIGNALS WITH THEIR ANTENNAS!?
AT THE TIME I BRUSHED IT OFF, THINKING IT WAS SOME WEIRD INTERFERENCE. BUT NOW I REALIZE THAT SOMETHING ON THIS PLANET WAS EMITTING IT! SOME SORT OF INTELLIGENT LIFE!
IT WAS FAINT...BUT DEFINITELY A REAL SIGNAL!
DAD'S TRYING HIS BEST, MOM. SO LET'S JUST CALM DOWN AND EAT FOR NOW.

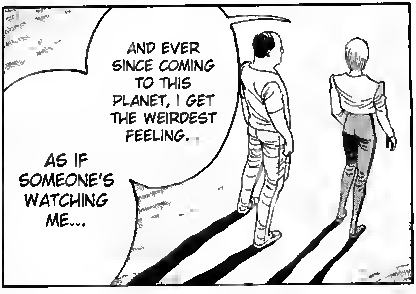


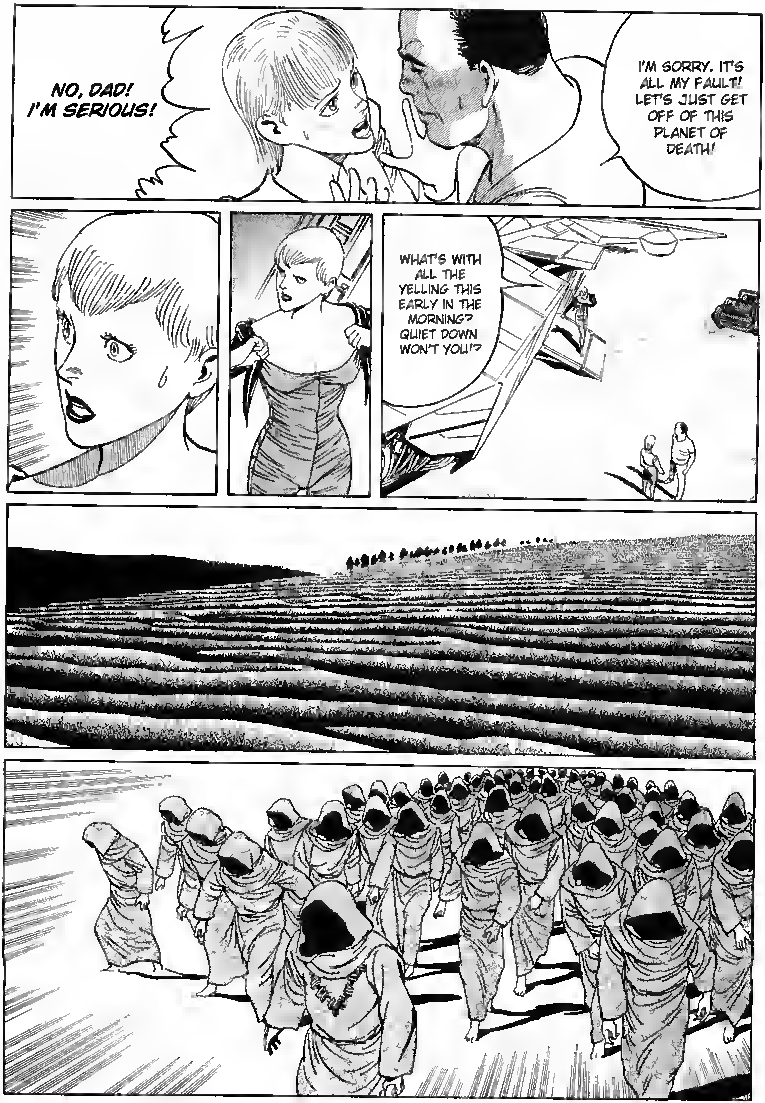
H''H''H''H''


.....
...DAD, I DON'T THINK THESE OCEAN WAVE SOUNDS ARE JUST A DREAM. THERE HAS TO BE AN OCEAN ON THIS PLANET SOMEWHERE!


YOU'RE UP EARLY, AND! IT'S A SHAME THAT DAWN'S THE ONLY TIME THIS PLANET FEELS NICE AND COOL...
I HEARD IT AGAIN LAST NIGHT...


AND!... YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT CHEERING YOUR DAD UP ANYMORE. I THINK I'VE FINALLY GIVEN UP...


AND EVER SINCE COMING TO THIS PLANET, I GET THE WEIRDEST FEELING...
AS IF SOMEONE'S WATCHING ME...


NO, DAD! I'M SERIOUS!
I'M SORRY. IT'S ALL MY FAULT! LET'S JUST GET OFF OF THIS PLANET OF DEATH!
WHAT'S WITH ALL THE YELLING THIS EARLY IN THE MORNING? QUIET DOWN WON'T YOU!?

T-THAT'S NOT IT CASSY...
W-WHA...? ALRIGHT, I TAKE BACK WHAT I SAID, KEVIN. ARE WE SUPPOSED TO GIVE THEM SOME KIND OF OFFERING FIRST? I DON'T KNOW IF WE HAVE ANYTHING TO...
WE DID NOT TRAVEL FOR SO LONG TO LIVE IN THIS INHOSPITABLE DESERT!
A FISH FOUND UNDERNEATH THIS SAND! THIS IS UNDENIABLE PROOF THAT A BOUNTIFUL SEA ONCE EXISTED HERE!
BEHOLD!
AMMON TELLS ME THAT THIS PLANET'S GOD OF THE SEA HAS BEEN ANGERED!

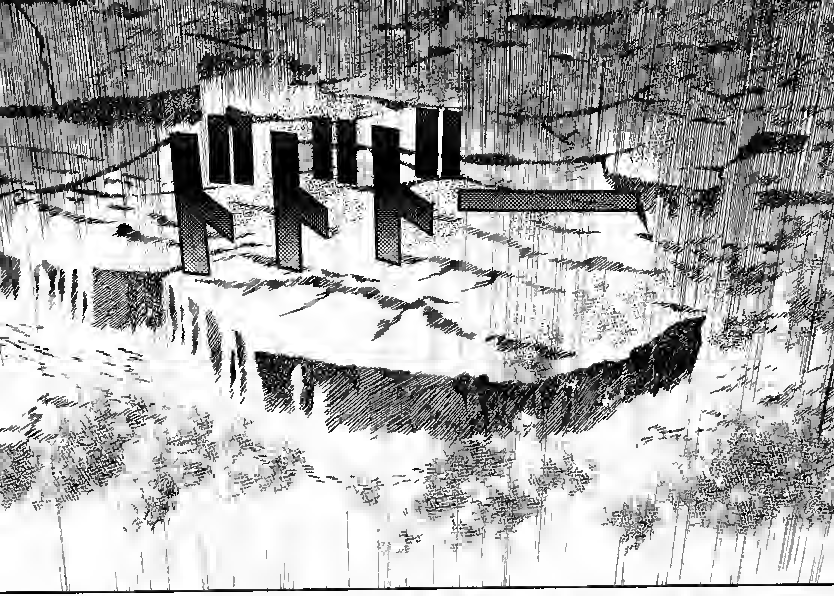
THEY MUST BE THOSE COLONISTS THAT WERE COMMON BACK IN THE DAY!
THAT'S BECAUSE THEY ARE FROM EARTH!
WHAT!? THEY'RE SPEAKING ENGLISH! IT'S AS IF THEY'RE FROM EARTH!
SHUT INSIDE THEIR SHIP, THEY TRAVEL FOR YEARS AND YEARS LOOKING FOR A HABITABLE PLANET. DUE TO THAT, THERE'VE BEEN CASES OF DEMENTIA AND CULTIST BELIEFS!
THOSE INFIDELS THAT ARRIVED HERE ON THE PROMISED LAND BEFORE US MUST'VE ANGERED THE SEA GOD!
W-WHAT ...!?
GET THAT GIRL!
WE MUST APPEASE THIS PLANET'S SEA GOD!

AHHHH! DAD!
AND!!! DAMN IT, LET GO OF HER!
THE GOD OF THE SEAS IS OVER THERE!

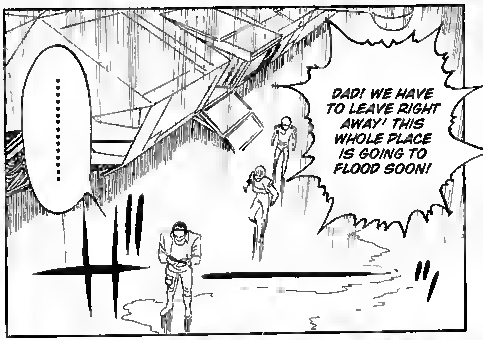
SO CALM THY ANGER AND REVIVE THE BOUNTIFUL SEA BACK ON THIS PLANET!
GOD OF THE SEAS! WE OFFER YOU THE BLOOD OF THIS GIRL!
!
NOOO!

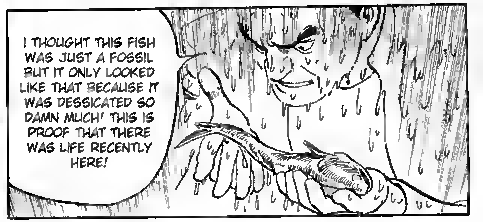
AGH!
UGH!
HOW DARE YOU!

ARE YOU HURT?
N-NO...
MY NAME'S PERIE AND I WORK IN THE OUTER SPACE ADMINSTRATION BUREAU! I'VE BEEN TAILING THOSE COLONISTS EVER SINCE THEY REFUSED TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES. IT LOOKS LIKE I MADE IT JUST IN TIME.
YES, AND THICK RAIN CLOUDS HAVE BEGUN TO FORM ALL OVER THIS PLANET
IT MAY EVEN RAIN ANY TIME SOON!
COOL-ING!?
I'VE DETECTED ELECTRICAL DISCHARGES AND ABNORMAL COOLING OF THE ATMOSPHERE
BY THE WAY, ARE YOU AWARE THAT THIS PLANET'S CLIMATE IS RAPIDLY BECOMING UNSTABLE AS I SPEAK?

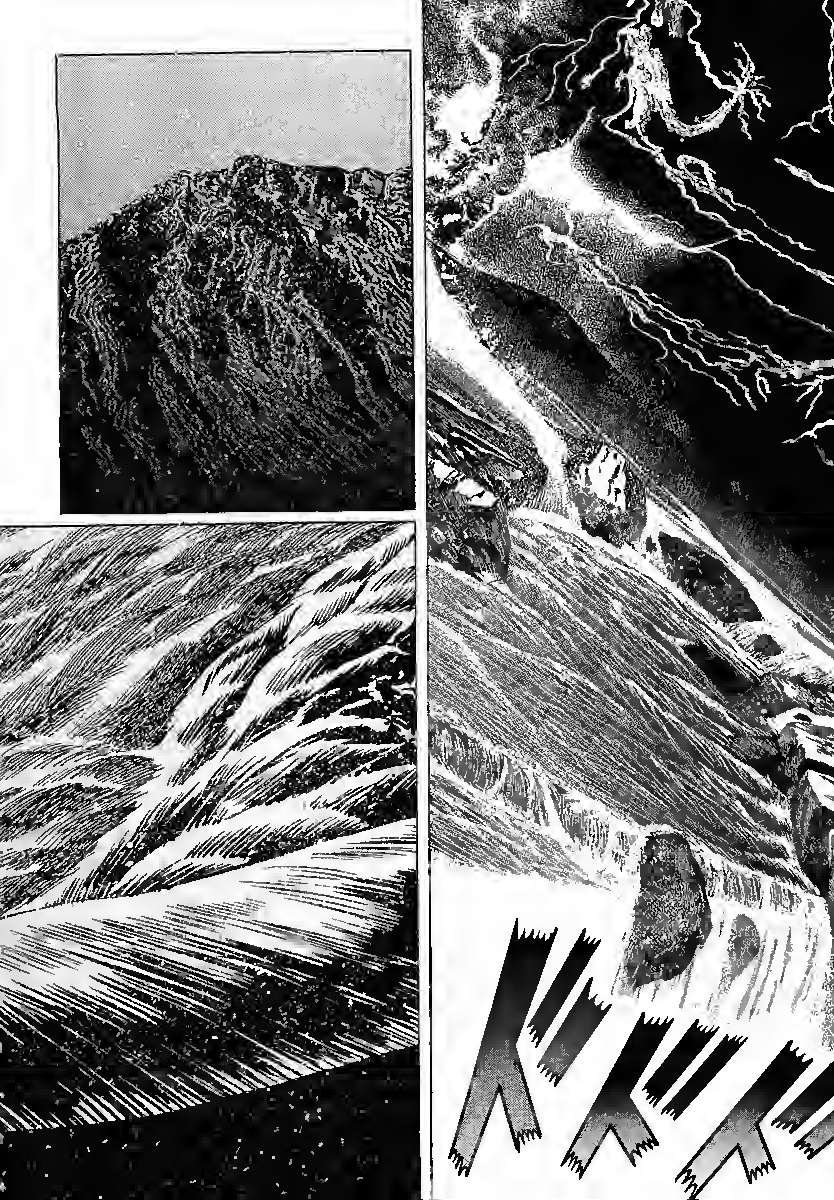


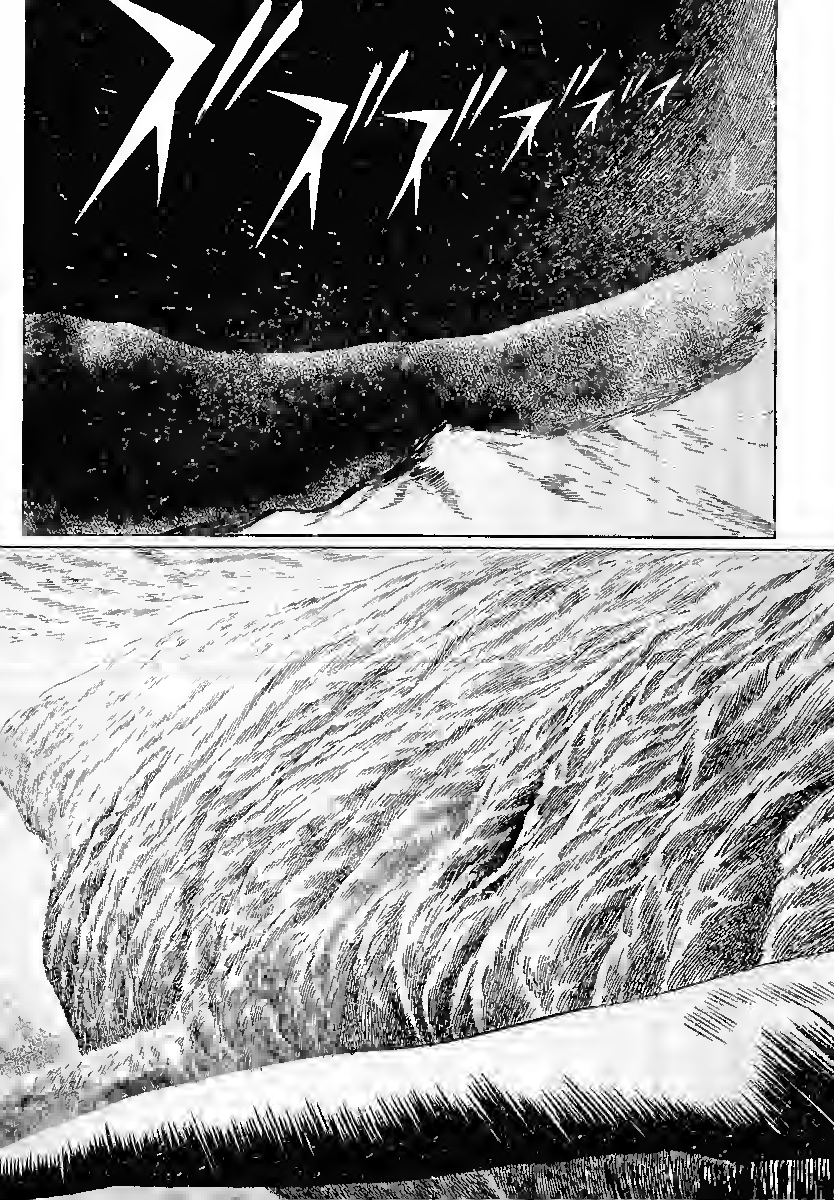
COULD IT BE? THAT THE CLIMATE OF THIS PLANET SWITCHES BETWEEN RAINY AND EXTREMELY DRY DEPENDING ON THE PHASES OF ITS STAR, MIRA!?
MEANING THAT AN OCEAN COULD ACTUALLY ...!?

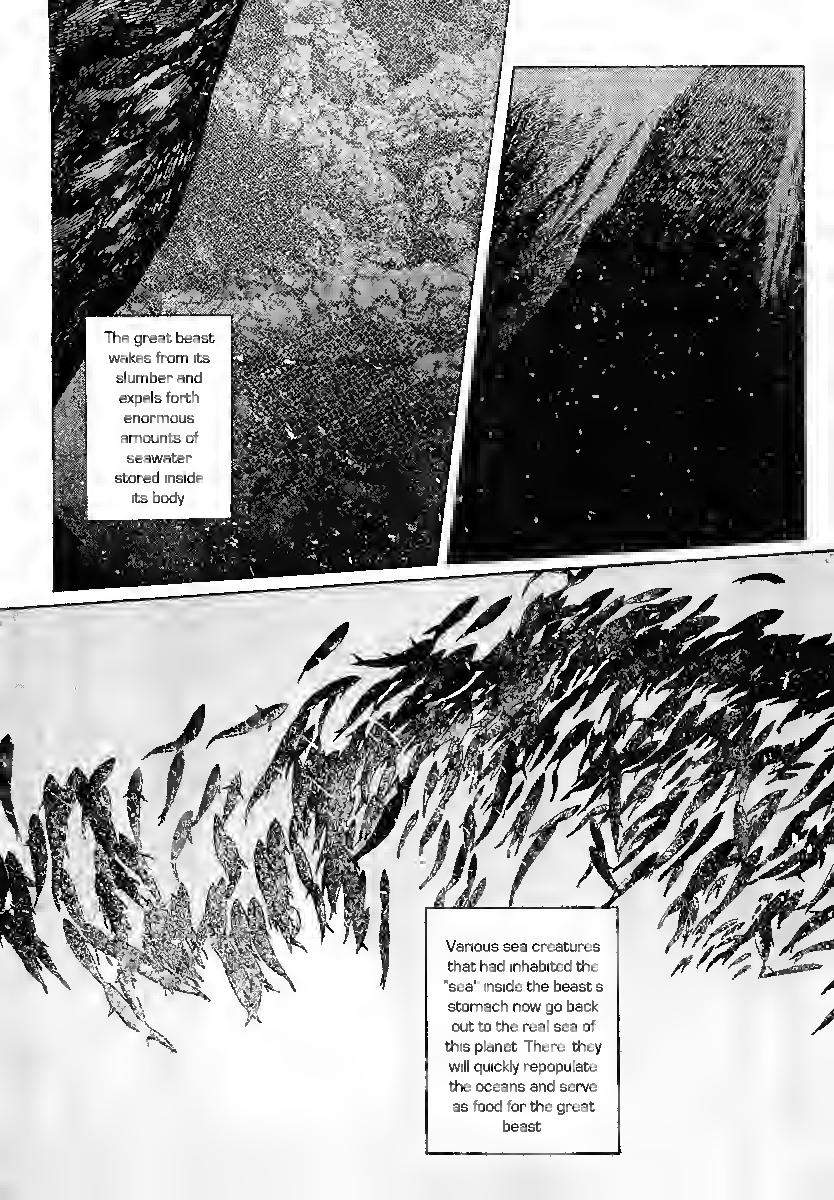

.....
DAD! WE HAVE TO LEAVE RIGHT AWAY! THIS WHOLE PLACE IS GOING TO FLOOD SOON!

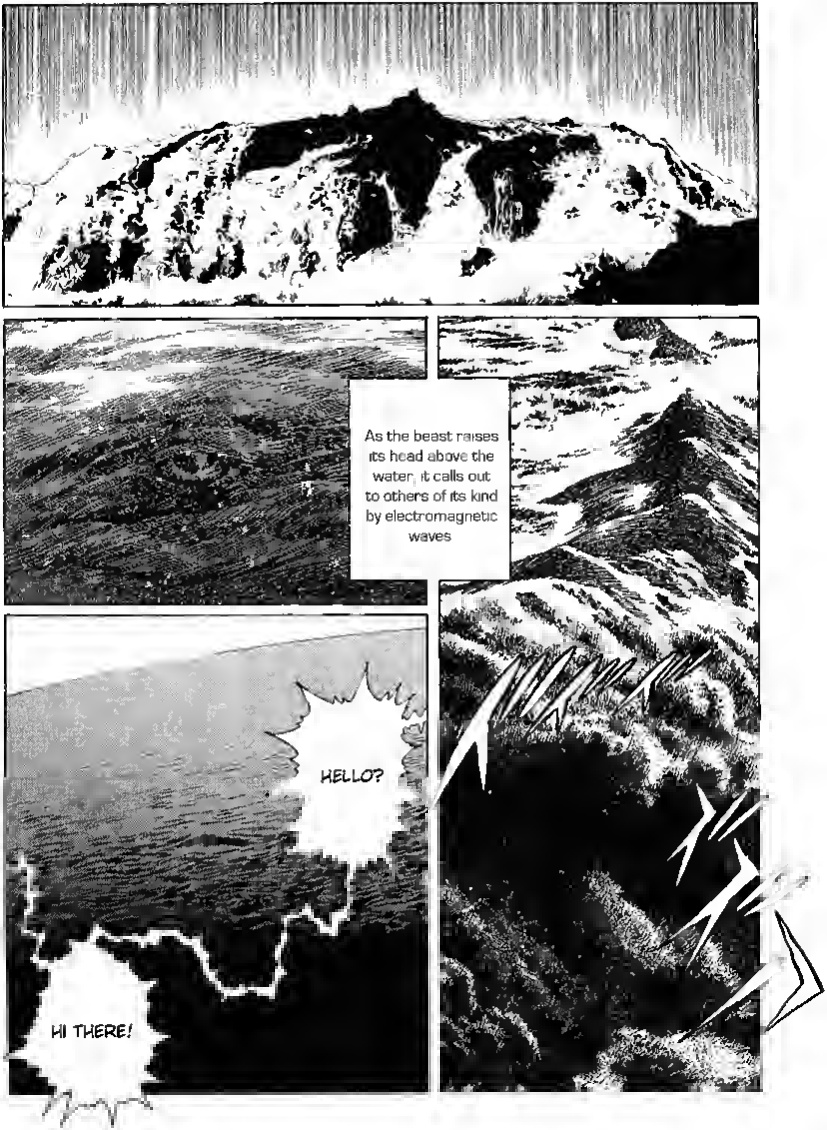

I THOUGHT THIS FISH WAS JUST A FOSSIL BUT IT ONLY LOOKED LIKE THAT BECAUSE IT WAS DESSICATED SO DAMN MUCH! THIS IS PROOF THAT THERE WAS LIFE RECENTLY HERE!

IF THERE'S ANYONE ON THIS PLANET, ANSWER ME!!!
ARE YOU THERE!? WHY WON'T YOU ANSWER ME!?
PROFESSOR! IF THE STORM GETS ANY WORSE, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO ESCAPE WITH ON OUR SHIP!
ANSWER MEEEEE!
AGHHHHH!
AHHHH



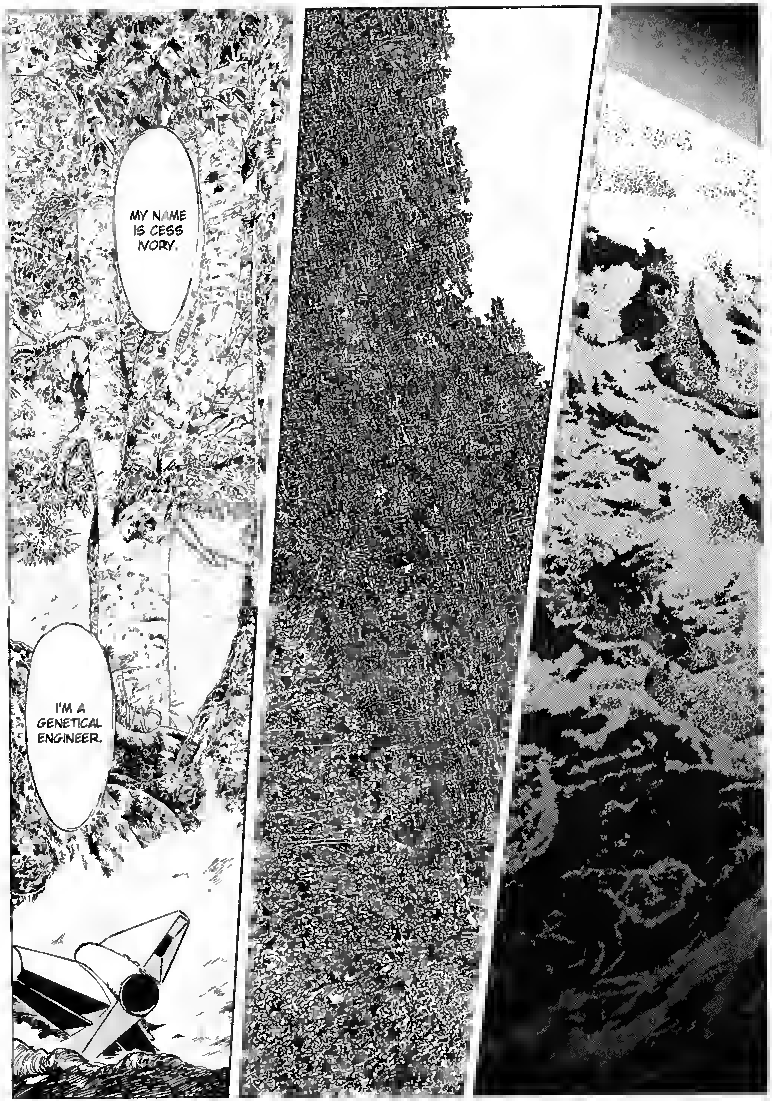



The great beast wakes from its slumber and expels forth enormous amounts of seawater stored inside its body
Various sea creatures that had inhabited the "sea" inside the beast s stomach now go back out to the real sea of this planet There they will quickly repopulate the oceans and serve as food for the great beast


As the beast raises its head above the water, it calls out to others of its kind by electromagnetic waves
HELLO?
HI THERE!

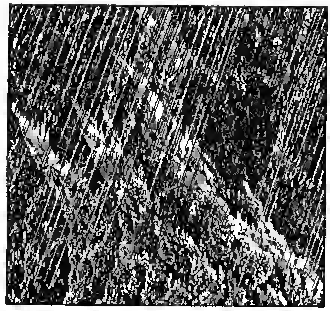
I GET THE FEELING THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING LIVING ON THE SAND WHILE WE WERE HIBERNATING.
YOU TOO!? I RECALL THIS FAINT VOICE CALLING OUT BUT IT DISAPPEARED SO SUDDENLY...
I THOUGHT I WAS JUST DREAMING...

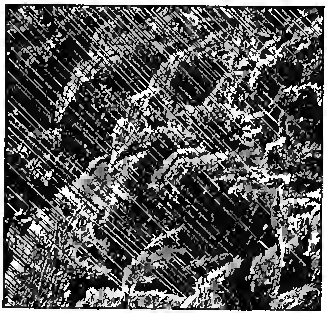
スターダストメモリーズ
Vol. 6 Cess Ivory's 21 Days

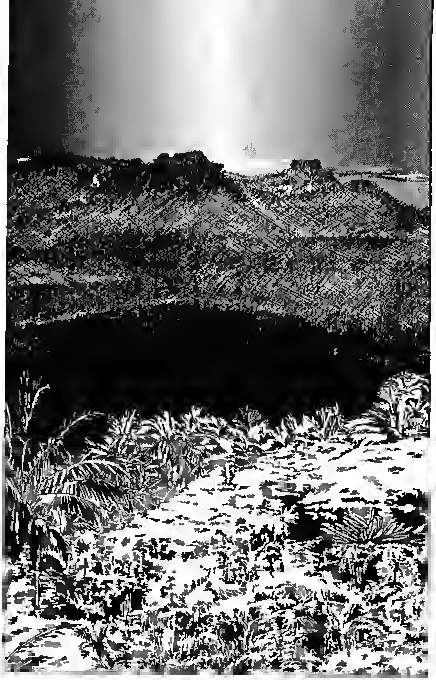

MY NAME IS CESS IVORY.
I'M A GENETICAL ENGINEER.

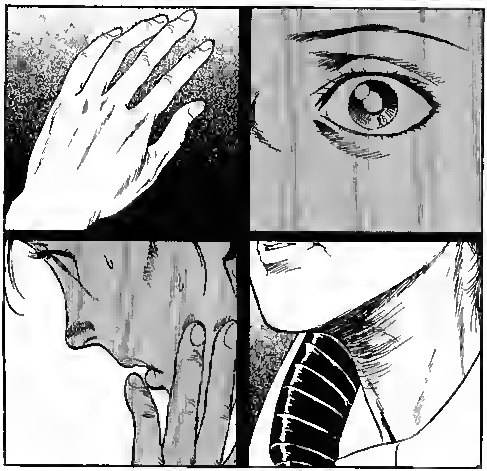
WHEN WE NEARED THIS PLANET, OUR SHIP'S SEED CULTIVATION CAPSULE SUDDENLY ACTIVATED, CAUSING THE PRESSURE TO BUILD UP WHICH RESULTED IN THE NUCLEAR REACTOR'S FAILURE.
MY BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH SHIP CRASH LANDED HERE ON PLANET LINDEN AFTER ITS NUCLEAR REACTOR FAILED.
AN EMERGENCY RESCUE SIGNAL WAS SENT BEFORE THE SHIP CRASHED BUT IT WILL TAKE AT LEAST 18 DAYS JUST FOR THE SIGNAL TO REACH THE NEAREST RELAY POINT. EVEN IN THE BEST CASE SCENARIO, HELP WOULD ONLY ARRIVE AT LEAST 3 DAYS AFTER THAT.
THE ONLY SURVIVOR IS ME. DUE TO THE FIRE THAT FOLLOWED AFTER THE SHIP'S CRASH LANDING, ALL THE FOOD SUPPLIES HAVE BEEN LOST.
IN THE MEANWHILE I'LL USE THIS DISK TO KEEP A LOG.
I HAVE TO SURVIVE ON THIS PLANET FOR THE NEXT 21 DAYS NO MATTER WHAT...!

FORTUNATELY, THERE'S NOT A LOT FOR ME TO WORRY ABOUT. THIS PLANET'S ATMOSPHERE IS PERFECT FOR HUMANS AND MY SHIP, BEING A BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH VESSEL, IS EQUIPPED WITH MACHINES THAT CAN TEST IF SOMETHING IS FIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION
THE LIFE ON THIS PLANET GROWS ASTONISHINGLY FAST. THE PLANTS GROW RIGHT BEFORE YOUR EYES.
ALMOST AS IF SOMETHING'S HURRYING THEM. IT ALMOST MAKES MY HEAD SPIN.









WHAT!? IT'S ONLY THE 3RD DAY! BUT... IT LOOKS AS IF I'VE AGED 10 YEARS!
MAYBE THE BINARY STAR OF THIS PLANET'S SYSTEM EMITS AN ABNORMAL AMOUNT OF SOME SORT OF RADIATION? AHH! THAT MUST BE WHY THE SHIP'S SEED CULTIVATION CAPSULE ACTIVATED ALL OF A S NO! NOW'S NOT THE TIME TO BE WORRYING ABOUT THAT!
COULD IT BE...!? THAT SOMETHING ON THIS PLANET SPEEDS UP THE LIFE CYCLE OF ITS ORGANISMS? MY CELLS MUST BE DIVIDING AND DYING AT AN UNPRECEDENTED PACE!
AT THIS RATE, I'M GOING TO DIE OF OLD AGE BEFORE MY 21ST DAY HERE!!!

I SHOULD MAKE A HOUSE
I HAVE TO USE THE REMAINING POWER ON THE SHIP TO RUN THE SEED CULTIVATION CAPSULE
A SMALL SHELTER WILL DO .
I'LL BE A MOTHER SOON . . .

MY OWN CELL... MY EGG...

THE 8TH DAY
MY OTHER SELF WAS BORN TODAY MY CLONE THAT INHERITED MY GENES
WAHH!
WAHH!
I KNOW THAT THIS IS FORBIDDEN BY THE LAW BUT WHAT ELSE AM I TO DO...?
SUICIDE AND CLONING WERE THE ONLY 2 CHOICES I HAD.
I MUST PASS EVERYTHING ABOUT MY SELF TO THIS CHILD...!
HAPPY TO HAVE ANOTHER I COULD SPEAK TO AT LAST. I TALKED ON AND ON TO MY OTHER SELF. EVERYTHING FROM MY PAST, PARENTS, HOME AND SO ON...

HER PHYSICAL GROWTH MAY BE FAST BUT SHE HAS MUCH TO LEARN AND TOO LITTLE TIME. ABOUT WORDS, CULTURE, SPACE AND EARTH... I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO LEAVE IT TO THE EDUCATION COMPRESSER MACHINE WHILE SHE'S SLEEPING
WILL THIS REALLY BE FINE...?
BUT IT'S POSSIBLE THAT A RESCUE SHIP COULD COME BEFORE THE 21ST DAY. IF A PASSING SHIP WERE TO INTERCEPT MY SOS SIGNAL, THEN HELP COULD ARRIVE BY THE 15TH DAY.
CONSIDERING THAT, THIS IS THE ONLY WAY.
PERHAPS ALLOWING HER TO LIVE IN BLISSFUL IGNORANCE MIGHT ALLEVIATE HER FROM HER FUTURE GRIEF AND SUFFERING

THE PASSING OF THE SEASONS IS SO SWIFT. IT'S ONLY BEEN 10 DAYS SINCE I CAME TO THIS PLANET AND YET I'VE...
RED AUTUMN FRUITS,
FALLEN LEAVES,
KA KA
COOL, WINDY SKIES...

OH? SO ANIMALS DO EXIST EVEN ON THIS PLANET THERE, THERE...
IT'S SO CUTE!
COME ALONG, DEAR. LET'S GATHER FRUIT WHILE THEY'RE STILL RIPE

I'M FINE DEAR. YOU CAN EAT THE REST
I DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME LEFT... WILL SHE BE ALRIGHT WITHOUT ME...?
MOM...?
MY DEAR... PLEASE FORGIVE ME FOR UNFAIRLY SENTENCING YOU TO SUCH A CRUEL FATE...
FORGIVE ME...!

THE 12TH DAY
I AM LEFT ALONE ON THIS PLANET...

SHE TOLD ME TO DO THIS ONLY IF HELP HADN'T ARRIVED BY THE 15TH DAY
I DID AS MY MOM INSTRUCTED ME AND PLACED MY EGG IN THE CULTIVATION CAPSULE
I NOW UNDERSTOOD WHAT SHE MEANT BY ALL THAT

WAHH!
THE 17TH DAY...
WAHHH!
WAHHH!
WAHHH!
STOP CRYING!
STOP CRYING! I'M SORRY BUT YOU HAVE TO LEARN ALL OF THIS! IT WAS THE SAME FOR ME!

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW LUCKY YOU ARE!? AFTER 21 DAYS, HELP WILL COME AND YOU'LL BE RESCUED! BUT WHAT ABOUT ME!?
IF I COULD ONLY BE... YOU...
I'M DOOMED HERE TO DIE! IF I COULD ONLY BE YOU...!

I HAVE NO PAST,
NOR FUTURE!
JUST TO RAISE THIS CHILD!?
MOM! FOR WHAT REASON WAS I BORN!?
MOMMM!
TO DIE AFTER LIVING ONLY FOR A FEW DAYS... IT'S TOO CRUEL!

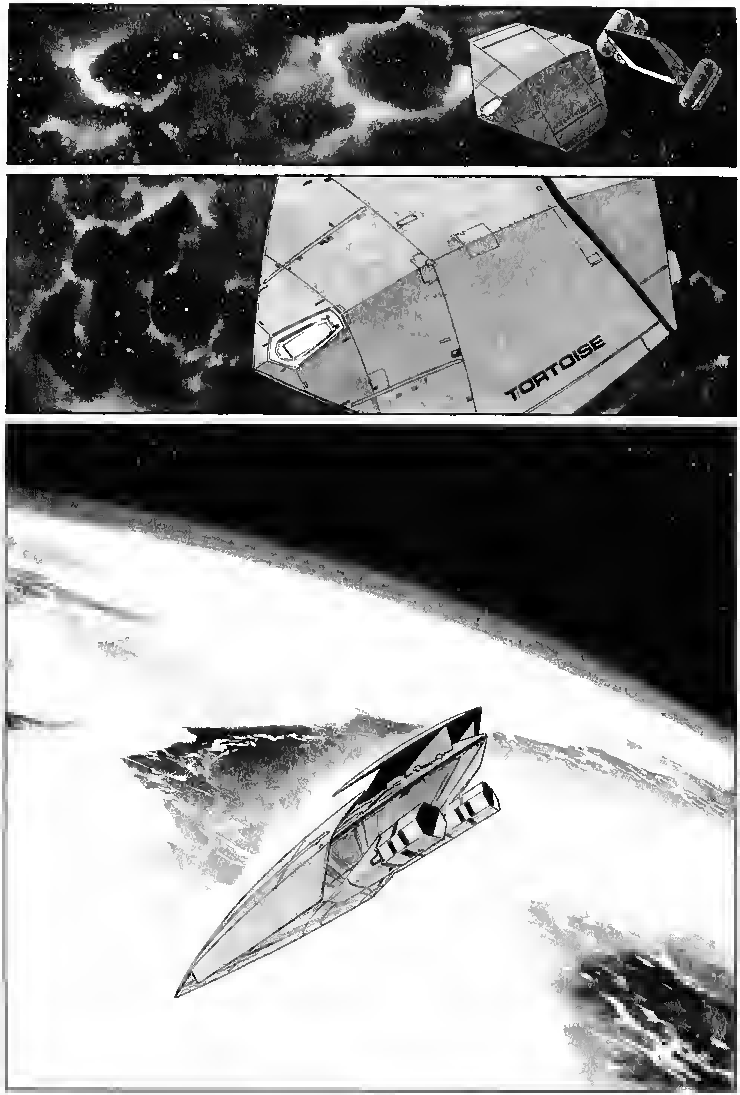
SEARCH CLOSELY LEAF BUDS MIGHT HAVE ALREADY SPROUTED
IF WE DON'T FIND ANY WE'LL BE EATING ROTTEN NUTS AND FRUITS AGAIN!
ARE YOU LISTENING!? STOP PLAYING AROUND!

IS THAT THE SAME ANIMAL FROM BACK THEN...!?
GET AWAY!
MOM!

MOM!
M...OM...

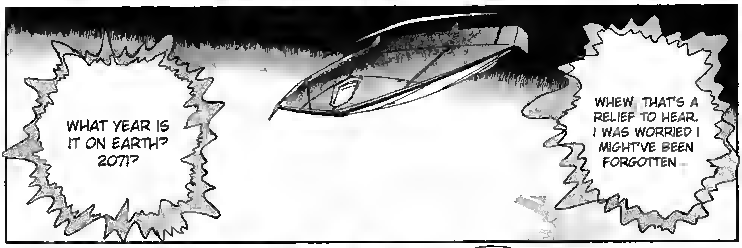
The 8th day
My other self was born today. My clone that inherited my genes...
I should make a house. A small shelter will do...
The 12th Day
I am left alone on this planet...
Mom! For what reason was I born!?
If I could only be you...!
If I could only be... you

YES, I'M CESS IVORY.
THE 21ST DAY
I FINALLY LEFT PLANET LINDEN...


TORTOISE

GUIDE THEM TO THE COURSE BONANZA. WHAT ABOUT THE BW NAVI? OH WAIT, THAT'S NO GOOD. HIS COMPUTER'S TOO OLD FOR THAT...
TORTOISE changing its course by 72°, speed +0.02... 6600 seconds until atmosphere reentry...

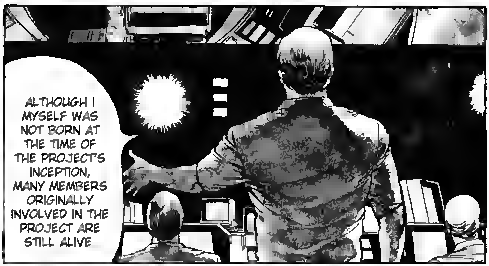
ON BEHALF OF EARTH, I WOULD LIKE TO CONGRATULATE YOU, ASTRONAUT GAI SHIMA.
THIS IS THE CONTROL ROOM. EVERYTHING IS A-OK. THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
TORTOISE, DO YOU RESPOND?


WHAT YEAR IS IT ON EARTH? 2071?
WHEW. THAT'S A RELIEF TO HEAR. I WAS WORRIED I MIGHT'VE BEEN FORGOTTEN...

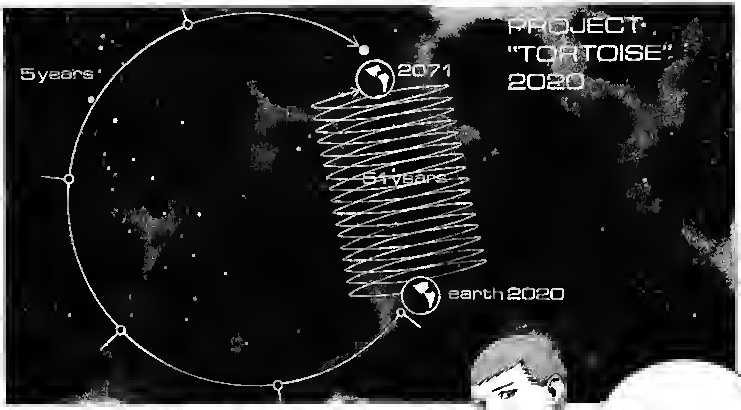
IT'S BEEN 51 YEARS SINCE YOU LEFT EARTH.
YES, YOU'RE RIGHT ON THE MARK.

SO IT'S BEEN 51 YEARS AND 2 MONTHS... LOOKS LIKE THE MISSION WENT OFF WITHOUT A HITCH
BET THERE'S NOT A WHOLE LOT OF PEOPLE WHO STILL REMEMBER ME THEN, RIGHT?

WHAT'S THE PRICE OF GOLD LIKE?
PARDON?


ALTHOUGH I MYSELF WAS NOT BORN AT THE TIME OF THE PROJECT'S INCEPTION, MANY MEMBERS ORIGINALLY INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT ARE STILL ALIVE

GOLD!
I WANT TO KNOW HOW MUCH THE PRICE OF GOLD WENT UP IN THE PAST 51 YEARS
AH, WHATEVER. I'LL JUST FIND OUT FOR MYSELF ONCE I LAND, HAHA



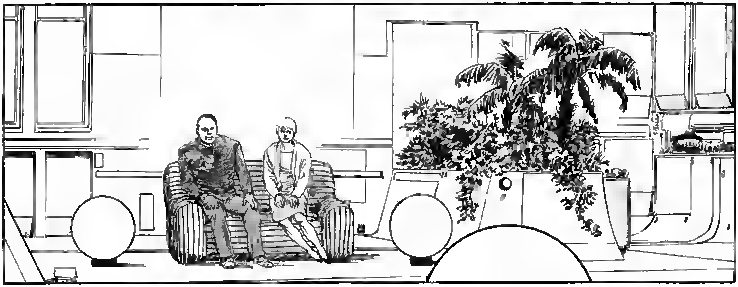
A LITTLE MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY AGO, THE TORTOISE PROJECT SENT OUT A MANNED SPACECRAFT ON A 5 YEAR LONG ROUND-TRIP THAT WOULD COVER A DISTANCE OF SOME SEVERAL LIGHT YEARS.
OF COURSE, THE NAME "TORTOISE" IS LITTLE MORE THAN A JOKE THE SPACECRAFT WAS BUILT WITH NUCLEAR FUSION PLASMA ROCKETS TO ATTAIN AN UNPRECEDENTED LEVEL OF SPEED.

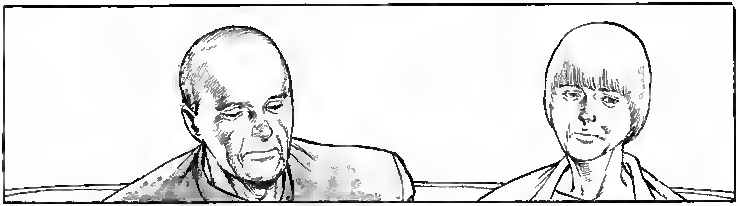
AND SO, THOUGH IT HAS BEEN 51 YEARS SINCE THE LAUNCHING OF THE TORTOISE, ONLY 5 YEARS HAVE PASSED FOR THE TORTOISE SHIP AND ITS PILOT
AS PREDICTED BY EINSTEIN IN THE 20TH CENTURY, TRAVELLING AT NEAR-LIGHT SPEEDS WOULD DILATE TIME ITSELF, CAUSING THE TRAVELLER TO AGE SLOWER THAN NORMAL.

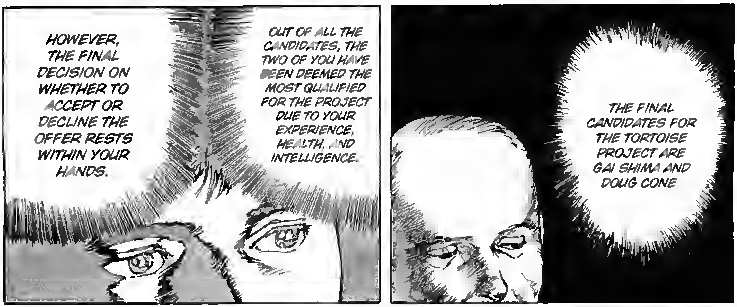
SOON, WE WILL BE ABLE TO WELCOME THE PILOT GAI SHIMA WHO WILL LOOK ALMOST THE SAME AS HE DID 51 YEARS AGO!
THIS IS ALSO KNOWN COLLOQUIALLY AS THE "URASHIMA EFFECT."

*IN REFERENCE TO THE FAMOUS JAPANESE TALE *URASHIMA TARO*

THIS SHOW IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE SPACE AGENCY IN COOPERATION WITH SHIRA MEDICINE CORP.
THE TORTOISE WILL REENTER THE ATMOSPHERE AND MAKE ITS LANDING IN A SHORT WHILE
PLEASE LOOK FORWARD TO THE UPCOMING INTERVIEW WITH THE LEGEND HIMSELF, GAI SHIMA.





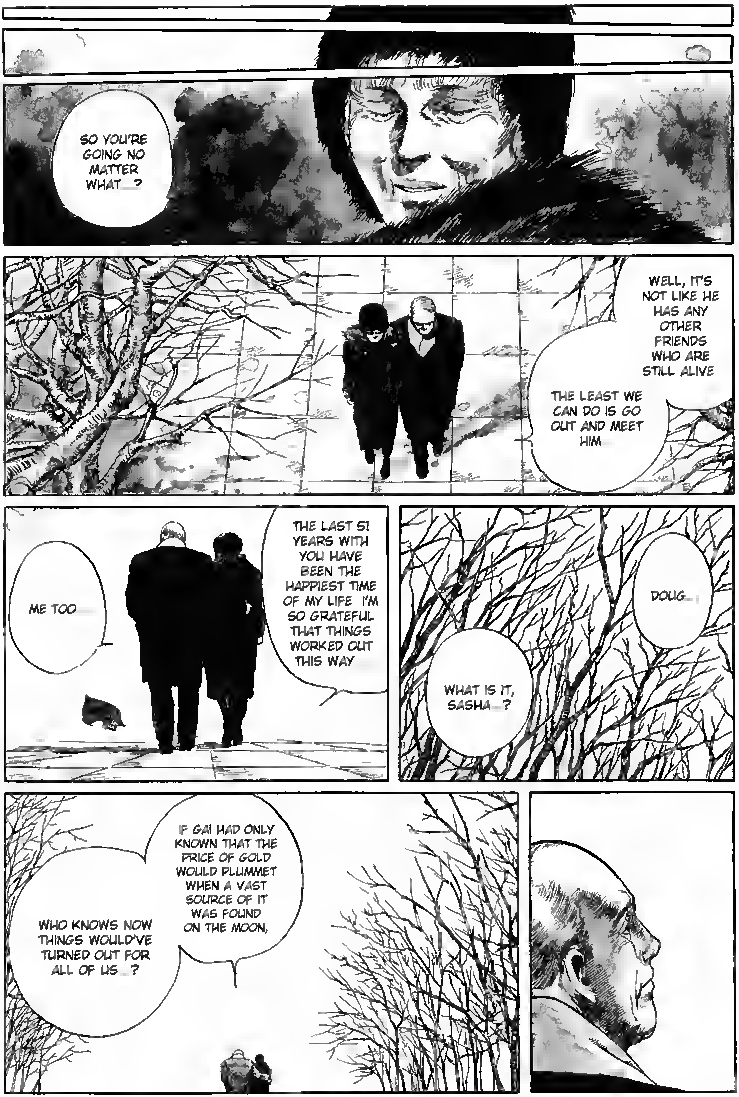

HOWEVER, THE FINAL DECISION ON WHETHER TO ACCEPT OR DECLINE THE OFFER RESTS WITHIN YOUR HANDS.
OUT OF ALL THE CANDIDATES, THE TWO OF YOU HAVE BEEN DEEMED THE MOST QUALIFIED FOR THE PROJECT DUE TO YOUR EXPERIENCE, HEALTH, AND INTELLIGENCE.
THE FINAL CANDIDATES FOR THE TORTOISE PROJECT ARE GAI SHIMA AND DOUG CONE

ARE YOU PLANNING ON THROWING IT ALL AWAY?
THE TWO OF US MAY BE ORPHANS BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS NOR LOVERS...!
BUT GA!... WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT YOUR GIRL, SASHA!?
HA! THE URASHIMA EFFECT AIN'T AS BAD AS YOU MAKE IT OUT TO BE, DOUG
IN 51 YEARS FROM NOW, ALL THE PEOPLE WE KNOW WILL EITHER HAVE PASSED AWAY OR BECOME FEEBLE OLD MEN AND WOMEN! ARE YOU REALLY FINE WITH THAT? YOU REALLY DON'T MIND BECOMING ALL ALONE IN THIS WORLD...!?
I'M SICK AND TIRED OF MY CURRENT LIFE AND THIS LOUSY WORLD. I'VE ALREADY MADE IT CLEAR TO SASHA.
THIS IS THE PERFECT CHANCE TO SAY GOOD-BYE TO THIS WORLD AND START ANEW! I'LL LITERALLY BE ABLE TO STEP INTO THE FUTURE!

AND I'M GONNA CONVERT ALL THAT CASH INTO GOLD. YOU UNDERSTAND WHERE I'M GETTING AT, DON'T YOU?
THE SPACE AGENCY IS GIVING ME AN ENORMOUS ADVANCE PAYMENT IN RETURN FOR ACCEPTING THIS PROJECT.
MONEY, WOMEN, YOU NAME IT! I'LL BE ABLE TO ENJOY THE FINEST THINGS IN LIFE WHILE AT THE PRIME OF MY YOUTH!
WHEN I'M BACK, I'LL BE REVERED AS A NATIONAL HERO!
AND ALL I HAVE TO DO FOR IT IS SPEND 5 YEARS IN A SPACESHIP!
JUST HOW MUCH DO YOU THINK THE PRICE OF GOLD WILL RISE IN THE NEXT 5! YEARS? 10 TIMES? 20 TIMES!? I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE BUT WHAT I AM CERTAIN IS THAT I'LL BE A MILLIONAIRE!

NO OFFENSE, DOUG, BUT YOU'RE JUST TOO SCARED YOU DON'T HAVE THE GUTS TO BE AS BOLD AS ME YOU'RE BETTER OFF STAYING HERE ON EARTH
WILL YOU REALLY BE SATISFIED WITH THAT, GA!!? YOU'RE SERIOUSLY GOING TO JUST ABANDON EVERYTHING YOU HAVE RIGHT NOW!?
AH, THAT'S RIGHT IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT SASHA, FEEL FREE TO GO OUT WITH HER
SHE'S ALL YOURS, HAHA!

SASHA


SO YOU'RE GOING NO MATTER WHAT...?
WELL, IT'S NOT LIKE HE HAS ANY OTHER FRIENDS WHO ARE STILL ALIVE
THE LEAST WE CAN DO IS GO OUT AND MEET HIM
THE LAST 51 YEARS WITH YOU HAVE BEEN THE HAPPIEST TIME OF MY LIFE. I'M SO GRATEFUL THAT THINGS WORKED OUT THIS WAY
ME TOO...
DOUG...
WHAT IS IT, SASHA...?
IF GAI HAD ONLY KNOWN THAT THE PRICE OF GOLD WOULD PLUMMET WHEN A VAST SOURCE OF IT WAS FOUND ON THE MOON,
WHO KNOWS HOW THINGS WOULD'VE TURNED OUT FOR ALL OF US...?

AGHH! GAI, THE TORTOISE'S REENTRY SPEED IS TOO FAST! AND IT'S DEVIATING ROUGHLY 1° OFF COURSE AS WELL!
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT!? THE SHIP'S COMPUTERS ARE TELLING ME EVERYTHING'S FINE!
WAIT, HUH!? WHY'S THE SHIP'S INTERNAL TEMPERATURE SUDDENLY RISING!?
GAI, WE JUST FIGURED OUT THE CAUSE OF THE ERROR! SWITCH OVER TO MANUAL-PILOT MODE RIGHT NOW!
THE COMPUTER IS RUNNING ITS CALCULATIONS BASED ON THE ATMOSPHERE DENSITY AND TEMPERATURE DATA FROM 51 YEARS AGO!

DON'T PANIC! JUST ADJUST YOUR COURSE ACCORDING TO OUR INSTRUCTIONS! AND BE PRECISE! EVEN IF YOU'RE OFF BY A LITTLE, THE FRICTIONAL HEAT BETWEEN YOUR SHIP AND THE ATMOSPHERE WILL BURN YOU ALIVE!
ALRIGHT, I SWITCHED OVER TO MANUAL MODE! BUT THE TEMPERATURE IS ALREADY 40° AND STILL RISING!
がたっ
がたっ
JUST A LITTLE MORE! YOUR GOAL IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU!
HANG IN THERE! YOU HAVEN'T TRAVELLED TRILLIONS OF KILOMETERS JUST TO DIE!
GEE, YOU SURE DO KNOW HOW TO CALM DOWN A GUY BY REMINDING HIM HE CAN DIE ANY MOMENT HOW FROM THE SLIGHTEST ERROR!

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TORTOISE! KEEP MAINTAINING YOUR COURSE DIRECTION!
TORTOISE!?

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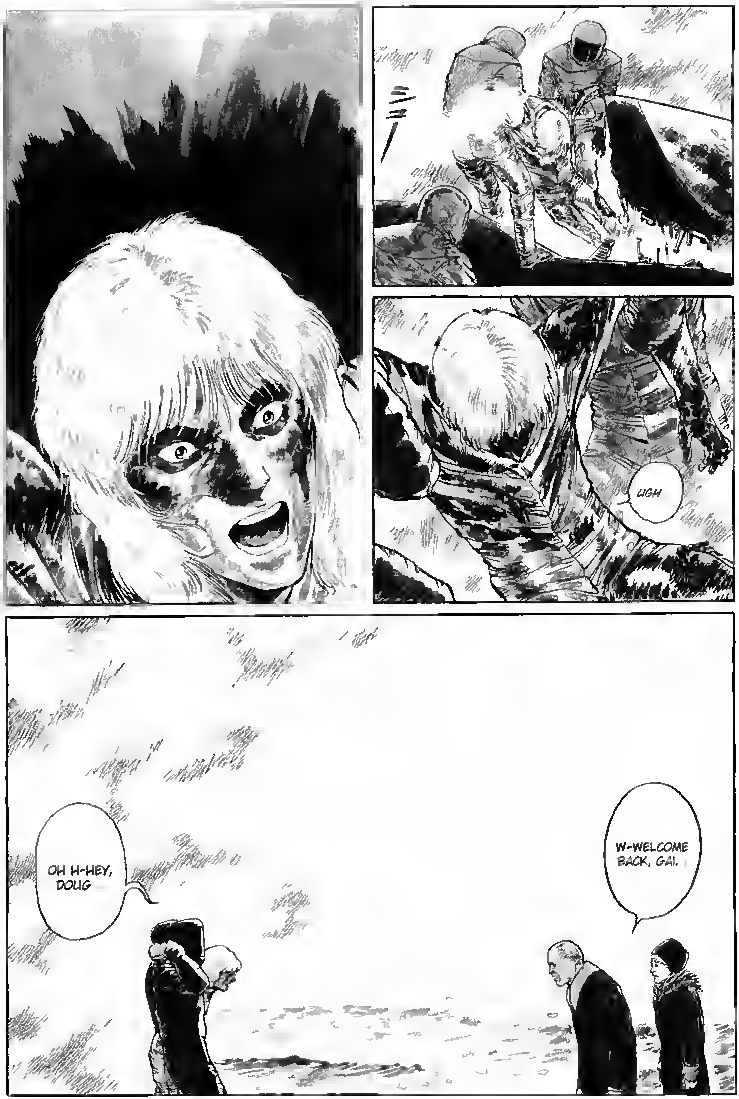
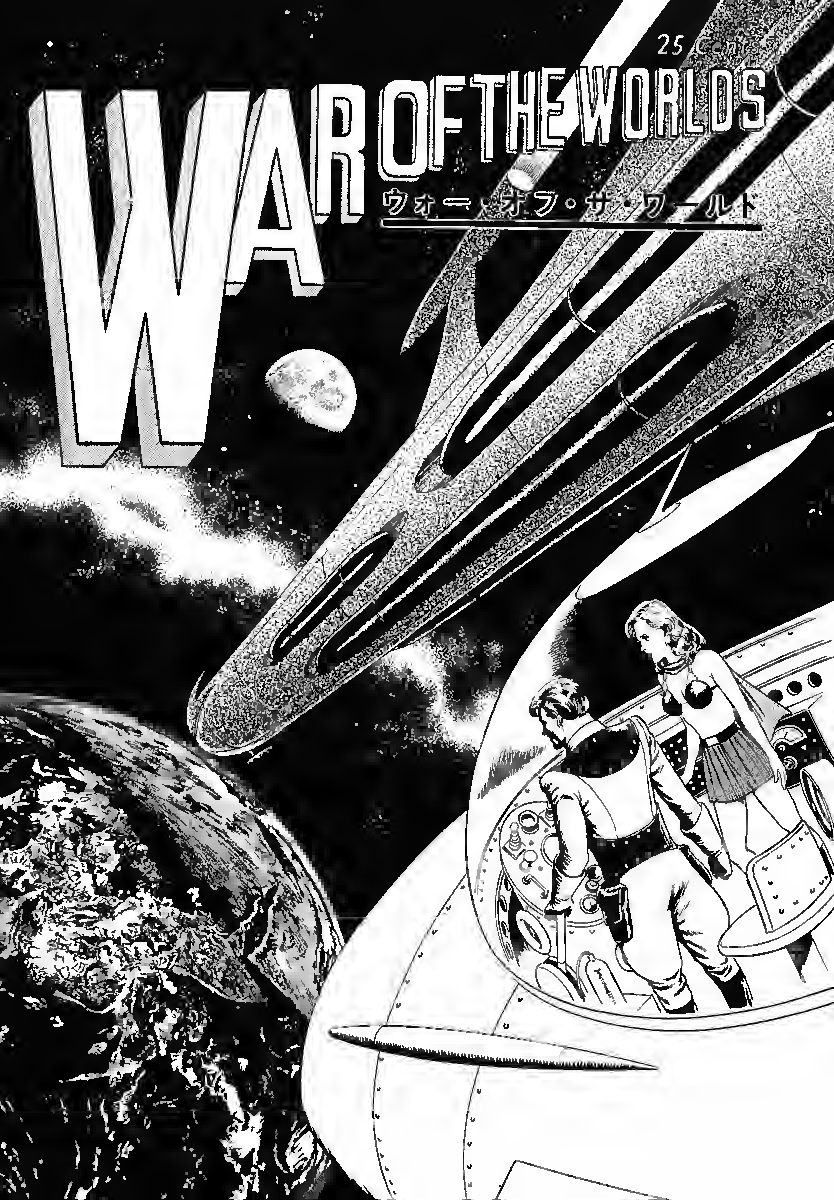

UGH
W-WELCOME BACK, GAI.
OH H-HEY, DOUG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WAR OF THE WORLDS
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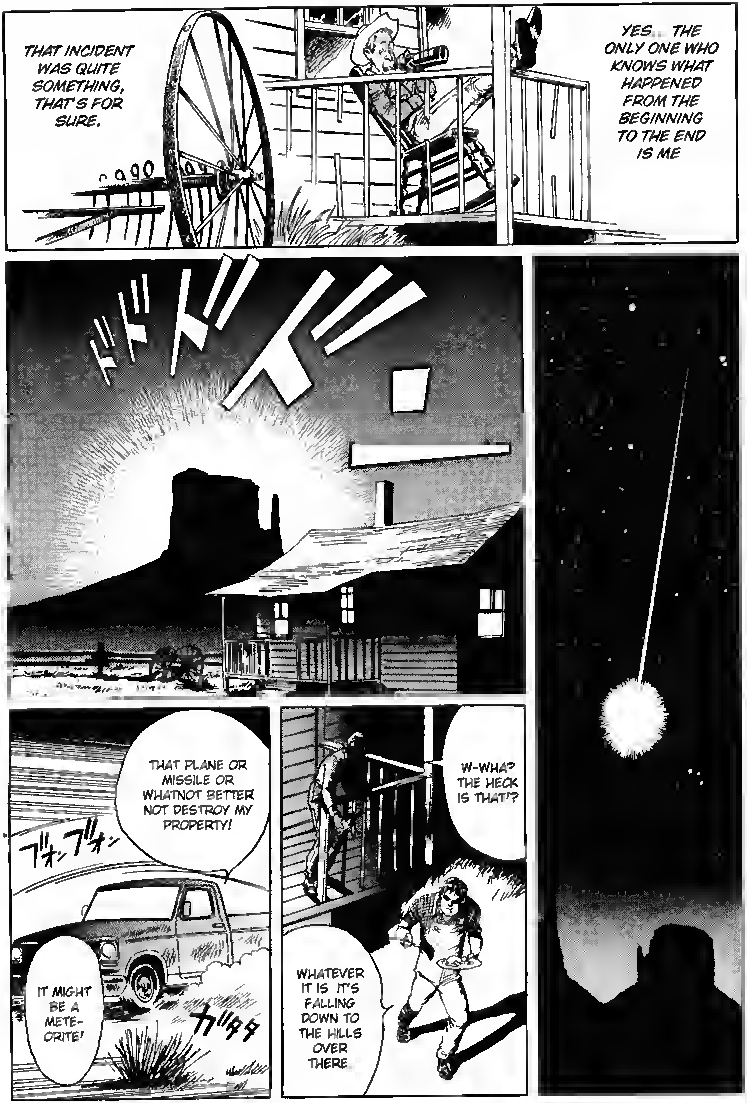
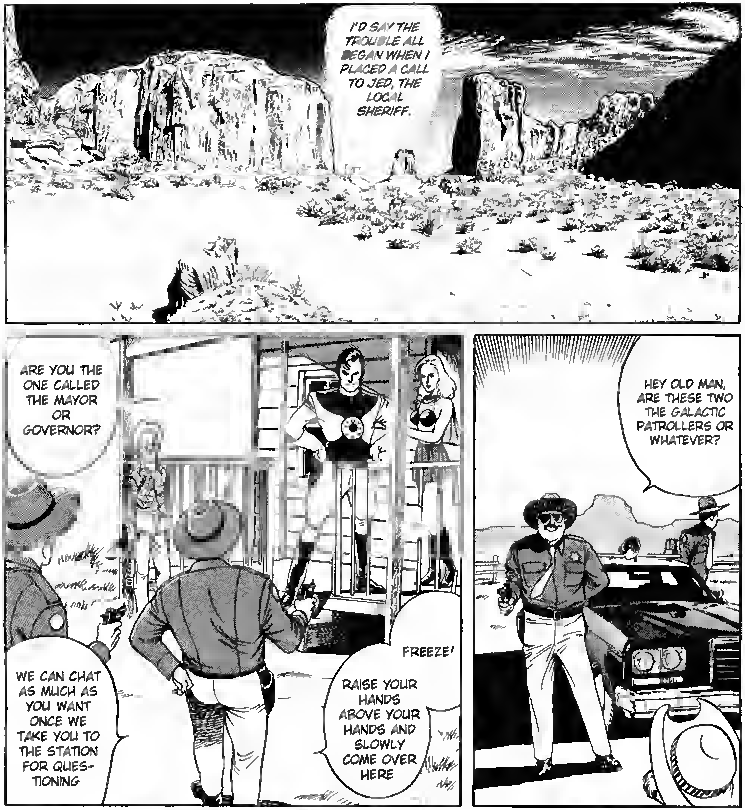

THAT INCIDENT WAS QUITE SOMETHING, THAT'S FOR SURE.
YES... THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS WHAT HAPPENED FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE END IS ME
ドドドド
THAT PLANE OR MISSILE OR WHATNOT BETTER NOT DESTROY MY PROPERTY!
ブォン ブォン
IT MIGHT BE A METE-ORITE!
カッ
W-WHA? THE HECK IS THAT!?
WHATEVER IT IS IT'S FALLING DOWN TO THE HILLS OVER THERE

YES, IT WAS QUITE A RIDICULOUSLY DESIGNED SHIP, SOMETHING SO OUTDATED AND TACKY YOU WOULDN'T EVEN SEE IN COMICS OF TODAY
WHAT IN THE...
ギギギ…
AND OUT FROM IT CAME TWO ALIENS WHO SPOKE IN PERFECT ENGLISH
WHAT A GREAT EVENING THIS IS. WOULD YOU MIND TAKING US TO YOUR LEADER?

W-WHY YES! HOW DID YOU KNOW!?
AND WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU TWO SUPPOSED TO BE? A GALACTIC PATROL UNIT?
MY SON DAVID THOUGHT THEY WERE ACTORS FROM A MOVIE SET WHILE I THOUGHT THEY WERE PART OF SOME HALF-BRAINED SCHEME COOKED UP BY THEM RUSKIES.
MAYOR? IS THAT THE YOUR WORD FOR THIS PLANET'S REPRE-SENTATIVE?
WOULD THE TOWN MAYOR SUFFICE AS A LEADER? IF SO, I CAN TAKE YOU TO HIM COME TOMORROW MORNING.
DAVID, THIS IS GALACTIC PATROL CAPTAIN CARTER. CAPTAIN CARTER THIS IS MY SON, DAVID
THE PLEASURE S ALL MINE MS. JANE. YOU CAN CALL ME DAVE MY, THAT'S A LOVELY OUTFIT. OF COURSE, IT'S NOT AS LOVELY AS YOUR EYES I CAN'T HELP BUT BE LOST IN THOSE DEEP SOULFUL EYES OF YOURS. I MUST CONFESS I'VE NEVER MET A WOMAN AS BEAUTIFUL AS YOU
I'M CAPTAIN CARTER AND THIS IS MY ASSISTANT JANE
AIR CARS? THE HECK IS THAT? ANYWAYS, THERE'S GOING TO BE A GRAND PARTY AT THE LOCAL HALL TOMORROW. MIGHT YOU HAPPEN TO BE A MORMON?
WHAT A PRIMITIVE VEHICLE! DON'T YOU HAVE ANY AIR CARS ON THIS PLANET?
GOVERNOR? IS THAT THIS PLANET'S LEADER!?
WELL NOT REALLY YOU STILL GOT THE STATE GOVERNOR ABOVE HIM, NOT TO MENTI

IT'S A RATHER PRIMITIVE PLANET BUT THE PEOPLE HERE SEEM TO BE GOOD FOLK
THE OLD MAN'S SON IS PARTICULARLY KIND
LOOK JANE THE VAST AND MAGNIFICENT GALAXY THAT STRETCHES OUT BEFORE US IS GOVERNED BY JUSTICE!
IT'S OUR MISSION TO HAVE THIS PLANET JOIN OUR GALACTIC ALLIANCE AND HAVE THEM SEE EYE TO EYE WITH US ON MAINTAINING THE PEACE AND SECURITY OF THIS GALAXY!
AH, WHAT A NOBLE DUTY WE HAVE, CAPTAIN!
MMM, JANE...
ANYHOO, THAT'S HOW OUR FIRST NIGHT WENT, YOU COULD PROBABLY SCORE SOME FREE DRINKS AT A BAR BY TELLING FOLKS THIS STORY SO FAR BUT YOU HAVEN'T HEARD ANYTHING JUST YET, THINGS WERE ABOUT TO GET WILDER.
DAD, CHANGE THE CHANNEL!
YOU AND YOUR PORNOS I'D MUCH RATHER WATCH SOME GOOD OLD WAR FILMS


I'D SAY THE TROUBLE ALL BEGAN WHEN I PLACED A CALL TO JED, THE LOCAL SHERIFF.
ARE YOU THE ONE CALLED THE MAYOR OR GOVERNOR?
WE CAN CHAT AS MUCH AS YOU WANT ONCE WE TAKE YOU TO THE STATION FOR QUESTIONING
FREEZE!
RAISE YOUR HANDS ABOVE YOUR HANDS AND SLOWLY COME OVER HERE
HEY OLD MAN, ARE THESE TWO THE GALACTIC PATROLLERS OR WHATEVER?
I REFUSE!
ED, GO CONFISCATE THEIR WEAPONS.

AGH!
L-LET ME GO! CAPTAIN CARTER, HELP!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON BUT THROW AWAY THAT GUN IF YOU WANT TO SAVE THIS WOMAN!
THAT'S RIGHT, HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT?
OHH, IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE A RAY GUN?
NO, I'M AFRAID NOT... FINE, IT LOOKS LIKE I HAVE NO CHOICE
CAN'T YOU SET YOUR PHASERS TO STUN OR SOMETHING?
SAVE THE CHATTER AND THROW YOUR GUN AWAY! DON'T MAKE ME TURN HER INTO SWISS CHEESE, HEH HEH
YOU VILE, COWARDLY BEAST!

OH, YOU MEAN LIKE THE LIONS CLUB? WELL SAVE YOUR EXCUSES AND GET IN THE CAR!
WE'VE ONLY COME TO PEACEFULLY INVESTIGATE WHETHER THIS PLANET IS CULTURED ENOUGH TO JOIN THE GALACTIC ALLIANCE!
AND IF NEEDED, THE CRUISER'S VALKYRIUM CANNON CAN BURN THIS ENTIRE PLANET TO A CRISP!
THAT'S RIGHT... IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO US, THE GALACTIC CRUISER WILL COME LOOKING FOR US!
YOU BARBARIAN! YOU'LL REGRET THIS!
AGHHH!
YEAH, YEAH, WHATEVER. TELL IT TO THE JUDG...

WHY YES! HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT?
COOL ROBOT YOU'VE GOT THERE. LET ME GUESS, IS IT CALLED FRIDAY?
HAHA! I THOUGHT THAT THIS MIGHT HAPPEN SO I CALLED OVER THIS ROBOT!
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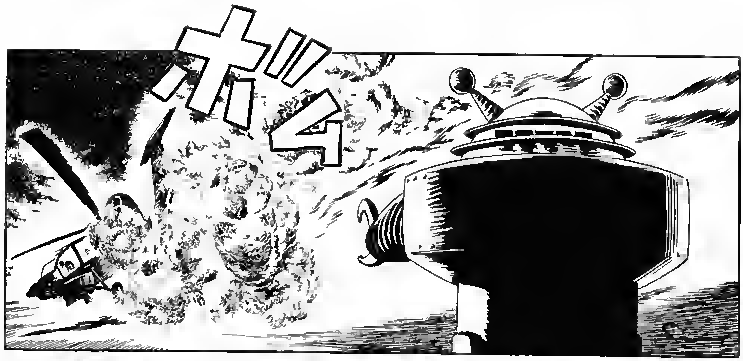
I DO NOT WISH TO HARM YOU ANY FURTHER SO TAKE ME TO YOUR MAYOR, GOVERNOR, OR WHATEVER YOUR LEADER IS CALLED!
Warning! Warning! My metal detector has detected something coming this way!
ガシャ ガシャ
WHAT!?
ギィィィーーン

IF ANYONE TELLS YOU THAT I THEN CALLED THE ARMY, THAT'S A BOLD-FACED LIE. THE NATIONAL GUARD WAS ALREADY ON THE LOOKOUT FOR A SPACECRAFT THAT HAD RECENTLY CRASHED.
ゴゴゴゴゴゴゴゴ
ゴゴゴゴ
SORRY FOR ALL THE TROUBLE BUT PLEASE TAKE US BACK TO OUR SHIP!
ブオンブオン
FRIDAY, YOU HOLD THEM OFF FROM HERE!
Understood
LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO FIGHT!
OUR SHIP IS EQUIPPED WITH AN EM BARRIER AND A HEAT RAY!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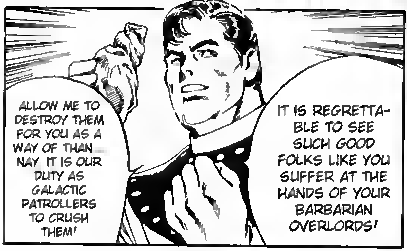
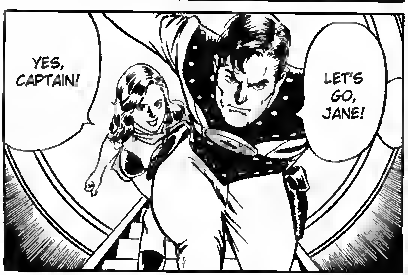
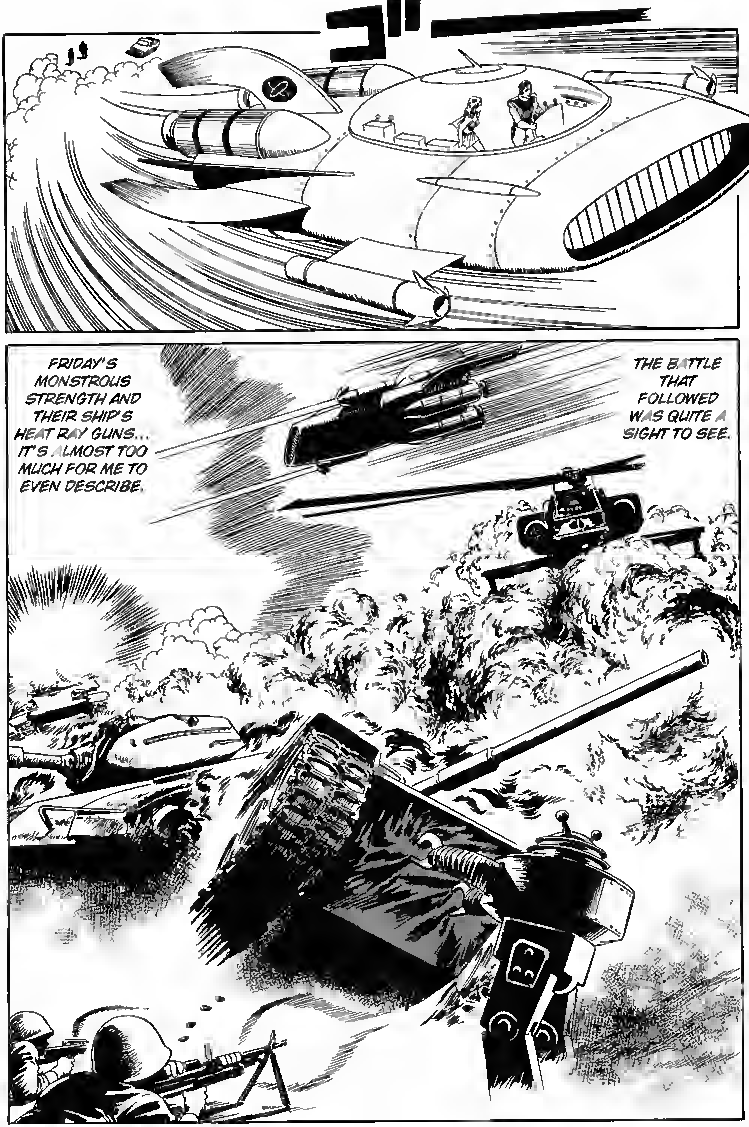
HERE, TAKE THIS AS A SOUVENIR. IT'S MY SPECIAL BOTTLE OF BOURBON.
THANK YOU ALTHOUGH I'M NOT A DRINKING MAN, I SHALL NEVER FORGET YOUR HOSPITALITY

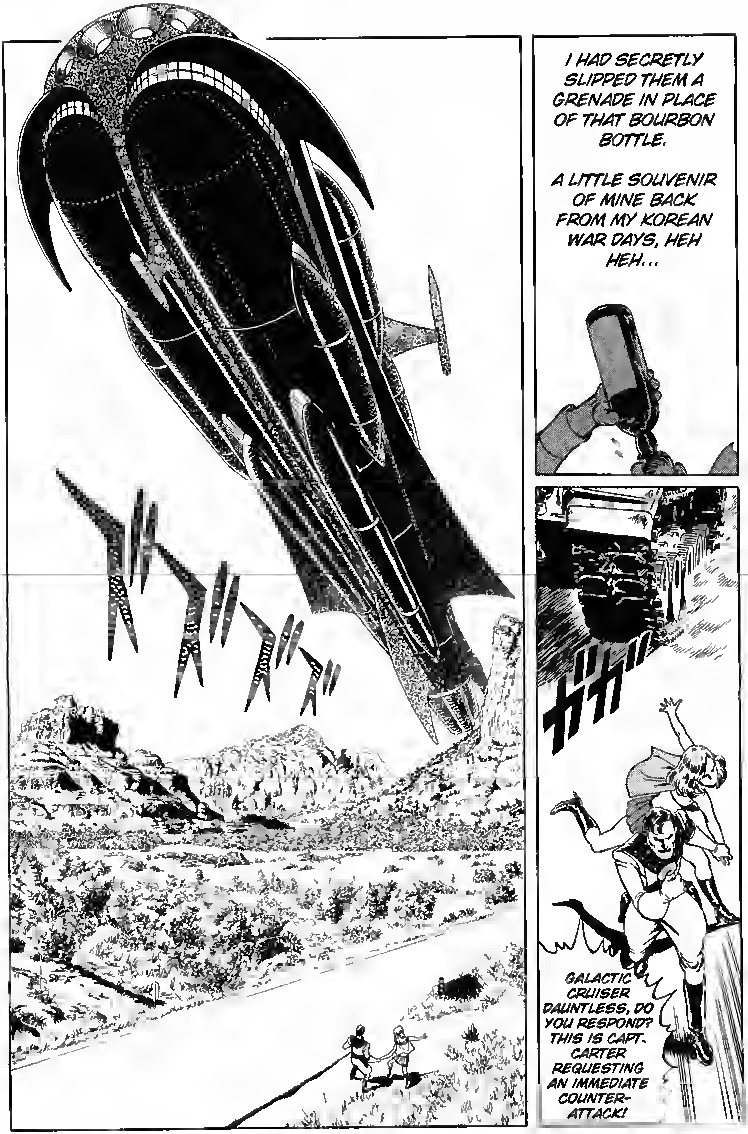

IT IS REGRETTABLE TO SEE SUCH GOOD FOLKS LIKE YOU SUFFER AT THE HANDS OF YOUR BARBARIAN OVERLORDS!
ALLOW ME TO DESTROY THEM FOR YOU AS A WAY OF THANKS. IT IS OUR DUTY AS GALACTIC PATROLLERS TO CRUSH THEM!


LET'S GO, JANE!
YES, CAPTAIN!

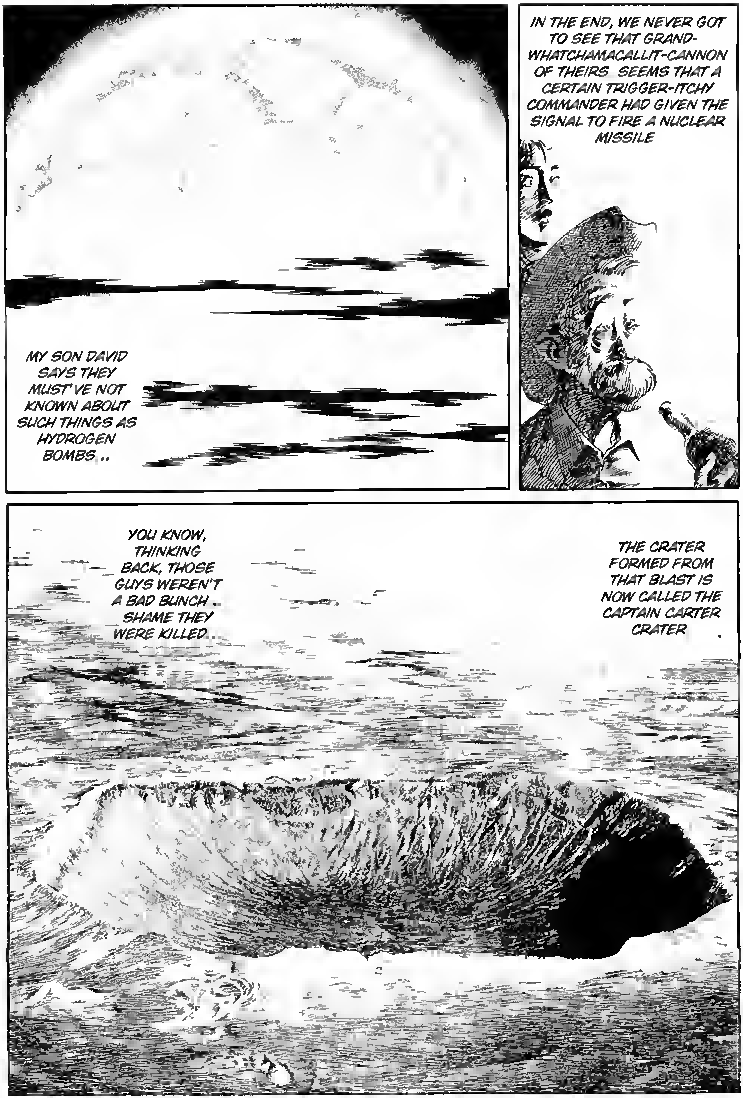
I THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HELP
I'M SORRY THINGS HAD TO COME TO THIS BUT THIS IS ALL FOR THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THIS GALAXY

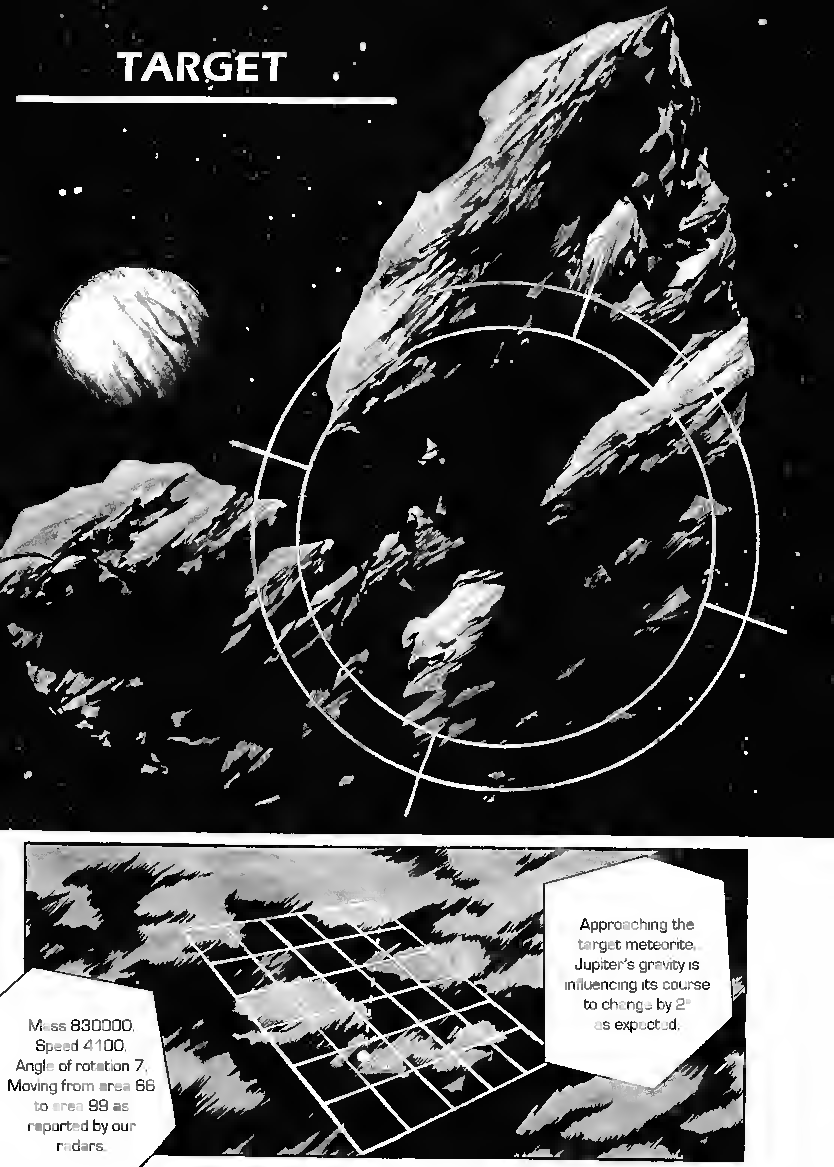

FRIDAY'S MONSTROUS STRENGTH AND THEIR SHIP'S HEAT RAY GUNS... IT'S ALMOST TOO MUCH FOR ME TO EVEN DESCRIBE.
THE BATTLE THAT FOLLOWED WAS QUITE A SIGHT TO SEE.

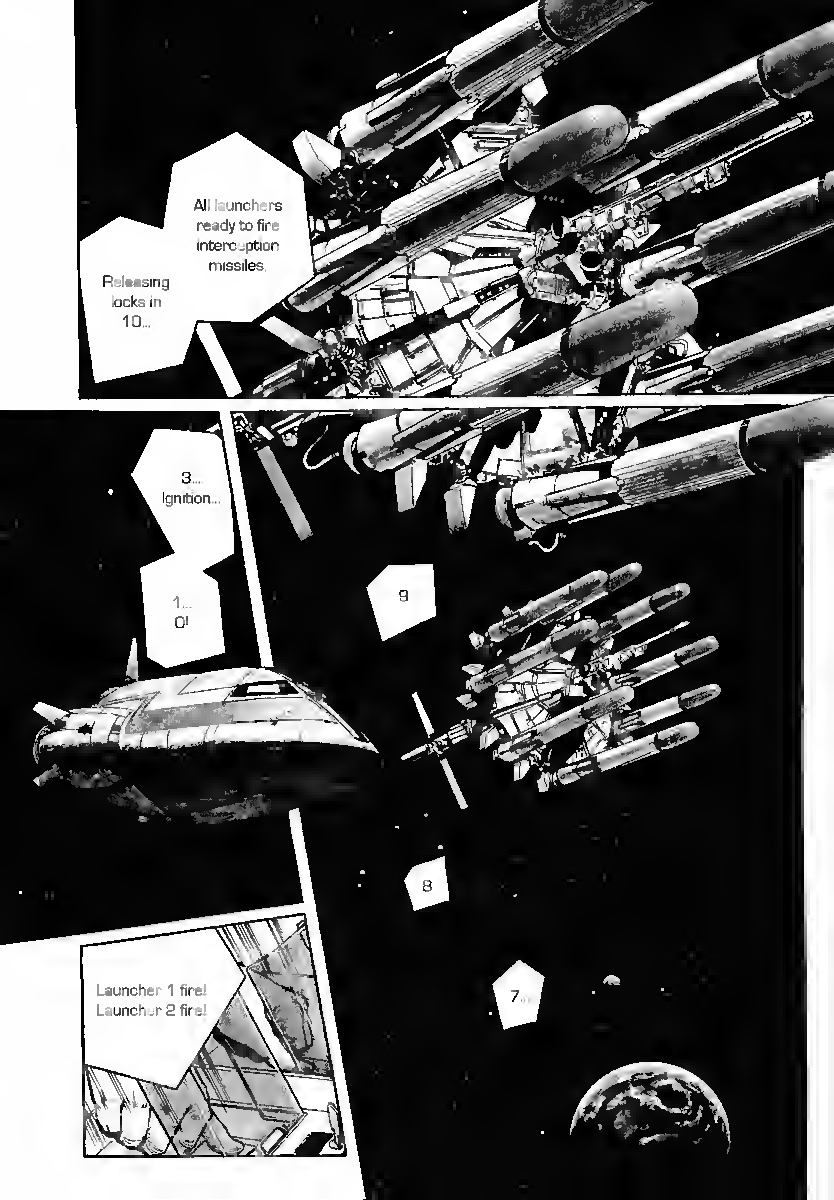
ズズン
AMAZING, CAPTAIN!
HAHAHA! AS IF THEIR WEAPONS COULD PENETRATE OUR ELECTROMAGNETIC BARRIER!
H-HANG IN THERE, CAPTAIN!
WHO COULD'VE PLANTED THAT BOMB...? AND HOW COULD THEY HAVE KNOWN THAT THE BARRIER IS USELESS AGAINST ATTACKS FROM WITHIN THE SHIP...!?
HEH EVEN A KID COULD FIGURE THAT OUT
ガガン


I HAD SECRETLY SLIPPED THEM A GRENADE IN PLACE OF THAT BOURBON BOTTLE.
A LITTLE SOUVENIR OF MINE BACK FROM MY KOREAN WAR DAYS, HEH HEH...
GALACTIC CRUISER DAUNTLESS, DO YOU RESPOND? THIS IS CAPT. CARTER REQUESTING AN IMMEDIATE COUNTER-ATTACK!

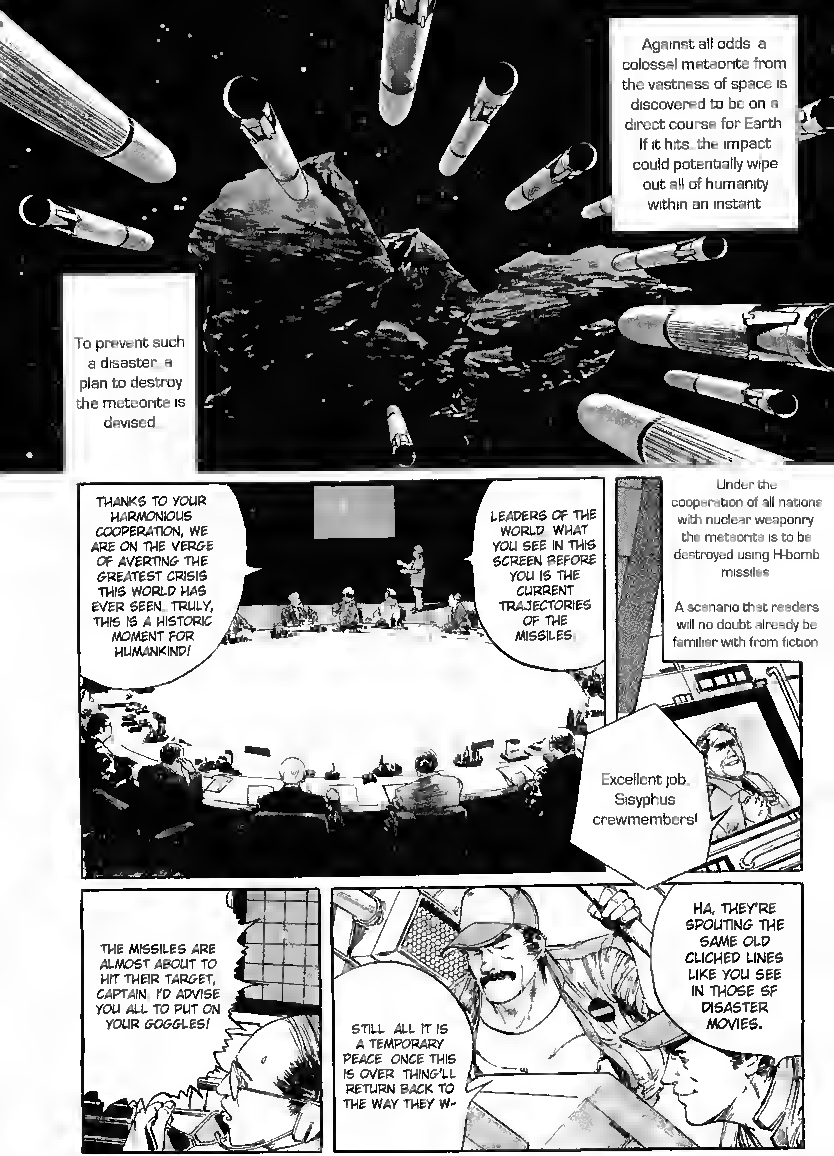
TALK ABOUT A LAME-LOOKING SHIP...
ドドドドド
THEY REMINDED ME OF CERTAIN HEROES...
I FOR ONE, CLEARLY SAW THE BEINGS INSIDE THAT SHIP.
PREPARE TO FIRE THE GRAND VALKYRIUM CANNON!


MY SON DAVID SAYS THEY MUST'VE NOT KNOWN ABOUT SUCH THINGS AS HYDROGEN BOMBS..
IN THE END, WE NEVER GOT TO SEE THAT GRAND-WHATCHAMACALLIT-CANNON OF THEIRS. SEEMS THAT A CERTAIN TRIGGER-ITCHY COMMANDER HAD GIVEN THE SIGNAL TO FIRE A NUCLEAR MISSILE
YOU KNOW, THINKING BACK, THOSE GUYS WEREN'T A BAD BUNCH.. SHAME THEY WERE KILLED..
THE CRATER FORMED FROM THAT BLAST IS NOW CALLED THE CAPTAIN CARTER CRATER.


TARGET
Mass 830000.
Speed 4100.
Angle of rotation 7.
Moving from area 66
to area 99 as
reported by our
radars.
Approaching the
target meteorite,
Jupiter's gravity is
influencing its course
to change by 2°
as expected.


All launchers ready to fire interception missiles.
Releasing locks in 10...
9...
Ignition...
1...
0!
9
8
7...
Launcher 1 fire!
Launcher 2 fire!

All missiles are following their planned trajectories 25000 seconds until target impact.
C'MON PLEASE HIT...
THAT COLOSSAL METEORITE IS HEADED RIGHT FOR EARTH, THREATENING TO WIPE OUT ALL LIFE AS WE KNOW IT AND YOU'RE TELLING ME A 0.0001% CHANCE IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME TO CALM DOWN!?
THE CHANCES OF FAILURE ARE LESS THAN 0.0001%, CAPTAIN.


Against all odds a colossal meteorite from the vastness of space is discovered to be on a direct course for Earth If it hits, the impact could potentially wipe out all of humanity within an instant
To prevent such a disaster, a plan to destroy the meteorite is devised
THANKS TO YOUR HARMONIOUS COOPERATION, WE ARE ON THE VERGE OF AVERTING THE GREATEST CRISIS THIS WORLD HAS EVER SEEN. TRULY, THIS IS A HISTORIC MOMENT FOR HUMANKIND!
LEADERS OF THE WORLD. WHAT YOU SEE IN THIS SCREEN BEFORE YOU IS THE CURRENT TRAJECTORIES OF THE MISSILES.
Under the cooperation of all nations with nuclear weaponry the meteorite is to be destroyed using H-bomb missiles
A scenario that readers will no doubt already be familiar with from fiction
Excellent job, Sisyphus crewmembers!
THE MISSILES ARE ALMOST ABOUT TO HIT THEIR TARGET, CAPTAIN. I'D ADVISE YOU ALL TO PUT ON YOUR GOGGLES!
STILL, ALL IT IS A TEMPORARY PEACE. ONCE THIS IS OVER, THING'LL RETURN BACK TO THE WAY THEY W-
HA, THEY'RE SPOUTING THE SAME OLD CLICHED LINES LIKE YOU SEE IN THOSE SF DISASTER MOVIES.

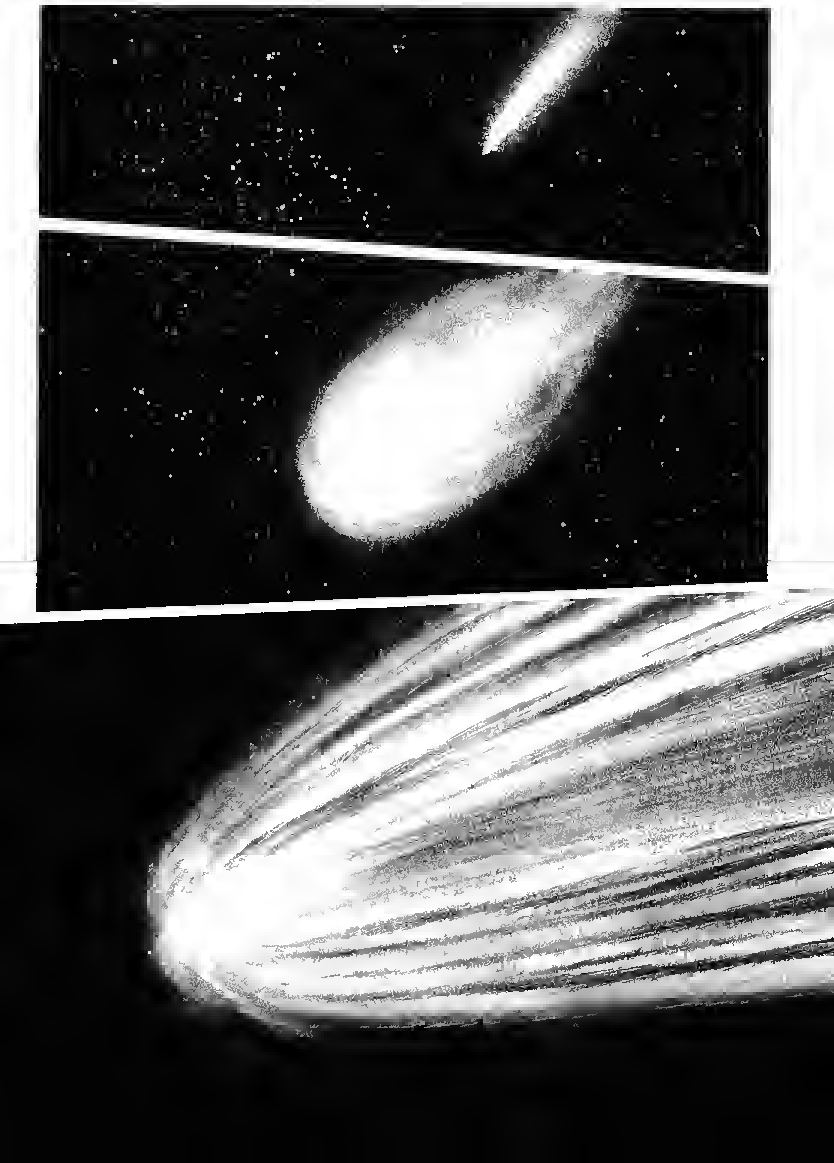
ALL MISSILES HAVE HIT THEIR MARK! WE DID IT!

CAPTAIN, WE'VE RECEIVED AN URGENT MESSAGE FROM EARTH!
WHAT, DO THEY WANT US TO MODIFY OUR RETURN ROUTE? OR MAYBE THEY WANT TO SEND OVER SOME CHAMPAGNE? HAHA!
Thus the meteorite was destroyed and the crisis was averted. Or it at least appeared that way...
W-WHAT!?

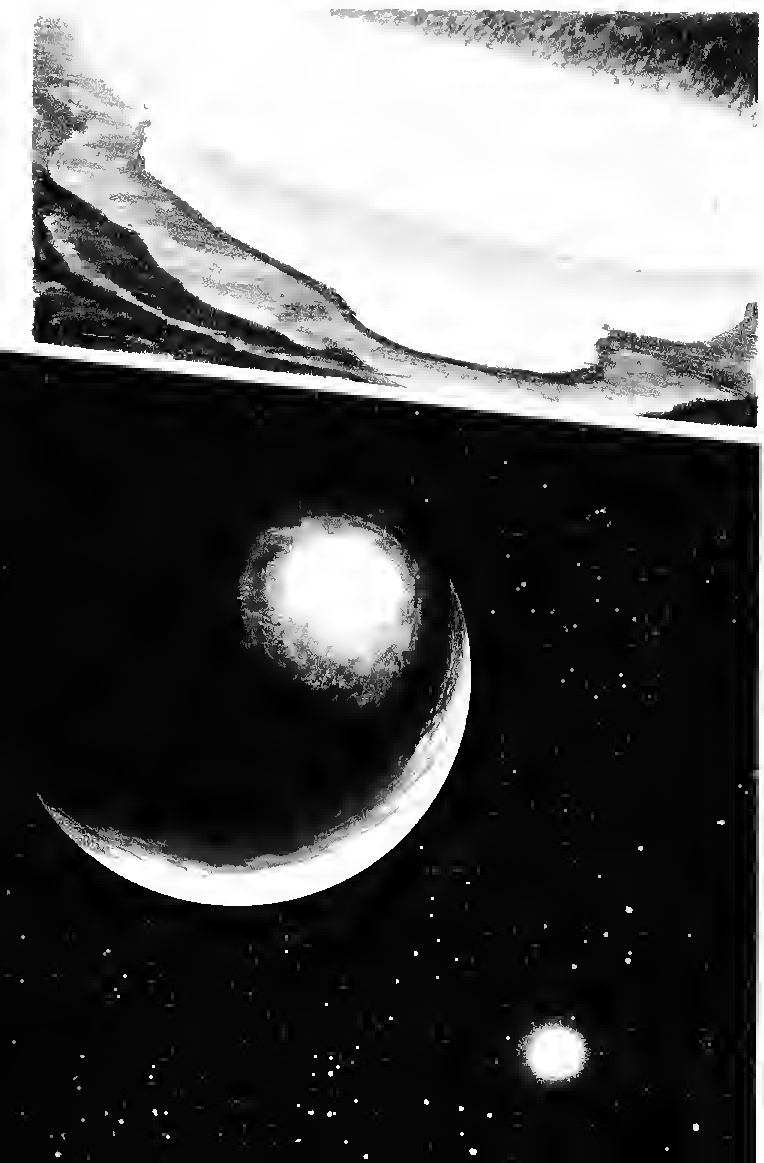
SOMEONE OUT THERE IS AIMING FOR EARTH!
I-IT SEEMS THAT METEORITE WASN'T THE ONLY ONE! THERE'RE STILL SEVERAL MORE THAT ARE JUST AS BIG...!
AND THEY'RE ALL ON A DIRECT COURSE FOR EARTH TOO!
WHAT!? THIS IS TOO MUCH TO BE A MERE COINCIDENCE!
WHA... B-BUT WHO!?
THE GOVERNMENTS BACK ON EARTH ARE KEEPING IT SECRET TO PREVENT MASS PANIC. IN THE MEAN-WHILE, THEY'RE SENDING US MORE MISSILES TO TAKE CARE OF THE OTHER METEORITES
HOW THE HELL WOULD I KNOW!? MAYBE IT'S SOME PISSED OFF ALIEN OR GOD HIMSELF!
GUESS OUR RETURN HOME IS INDEFINITELY POSTPONED THEN, HUH...
WE'LL HAVE TO STAY HERE AND FIRE THE MISSILES SHIPPED FROM BACK HOME

Yes... For the time being, the peace could continue...

F-FOR HOW LONG, CAPTAIN? JUST HOW MANY OF THOSE METEORITES ARE OUT THERE?
HOW LONG.. ?
UNTIL WE RUN OUT OF WEAPONS TO BLOW THEM UP WITH! LUCKILY FOR US, WE'VE GOT A HUGE STOCKPILE BACK ON EARTH
COULD IT BE? PERHAPS THE REAL TARGET OF THE METEORITE IS



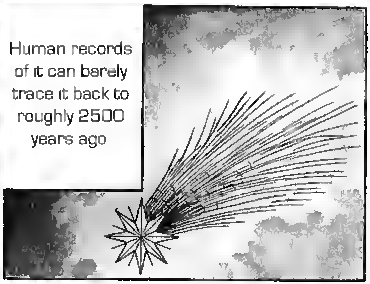
The Great Return

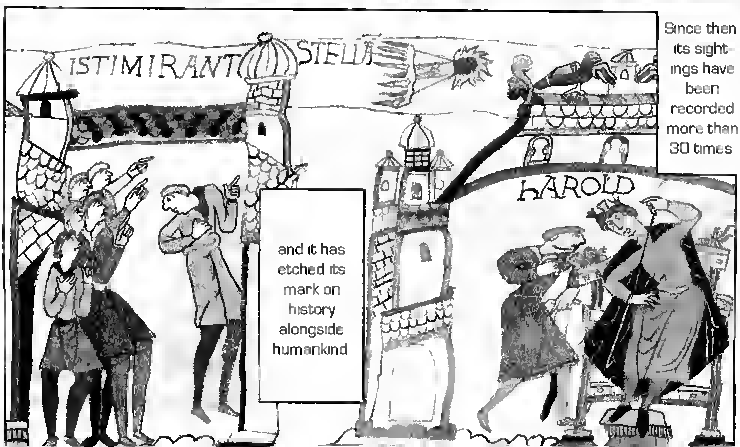


D... DETER MINE THE CAUSE THIS INSTANT!
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED!?

For how many years has that celestial body been orbiting around the solar system, only god can say for sure

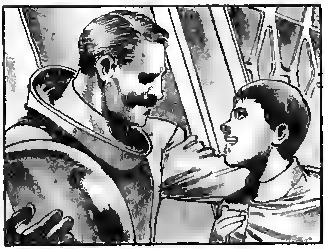
Human records of it can barely trace it back to roughly 2500 years ago

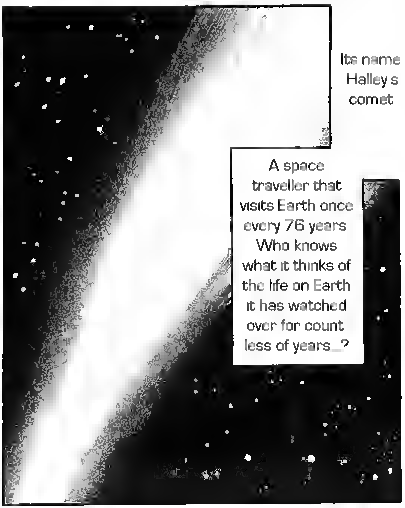


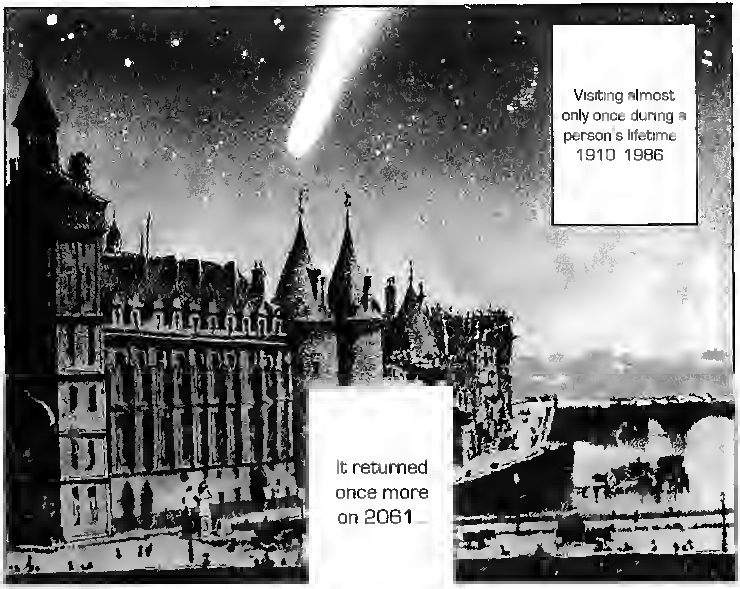


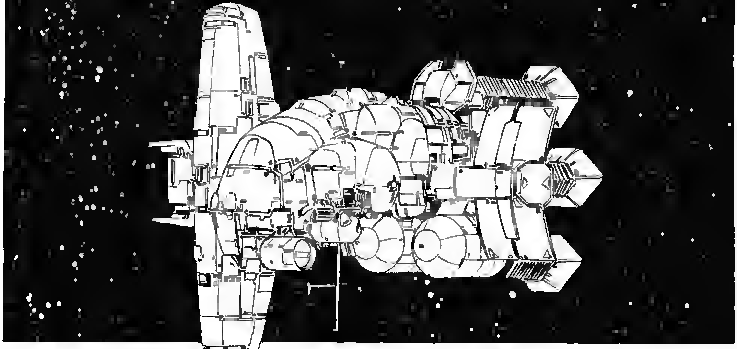
and it has etched its mark on history alongside humankind

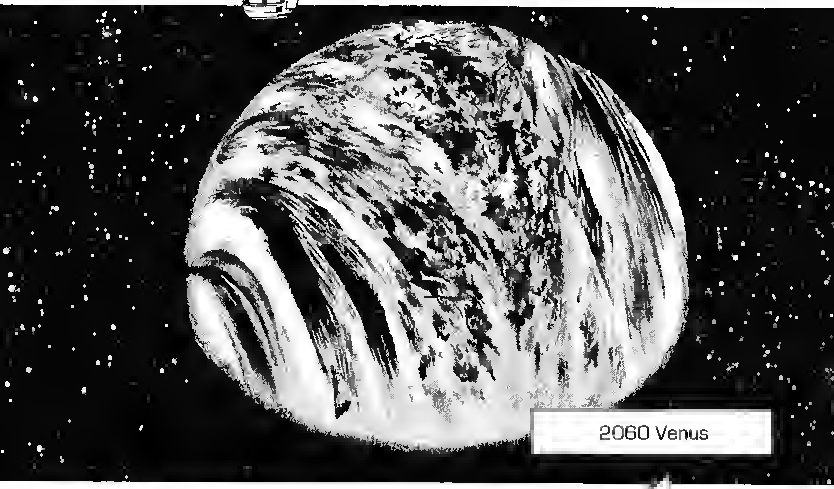
Since then its sightings have been recorded more than 30 times

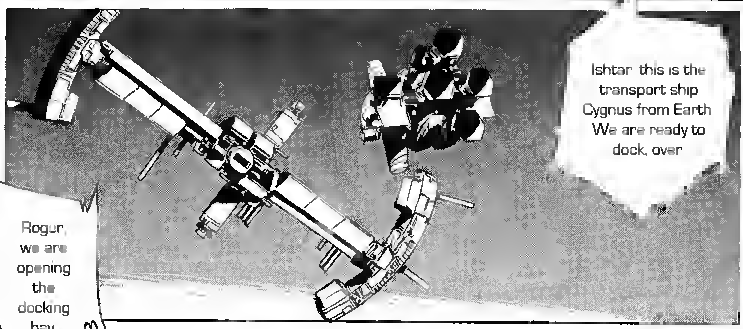



Its name
Halley's
comet
A space
traveller that
visits Earth once
every 76 years
Who knows
what it thinks of
the life on Earth
it has watched
over for count
less of years...?


Visiting almost
only once during a
person's lifetime
1910 1986
It returned
once more
on 2061...




2060 Venus


Ishtar this is the transport ship Cygnus from Earth We are ready to dock, over
Rogur, we are opening the docking bay.

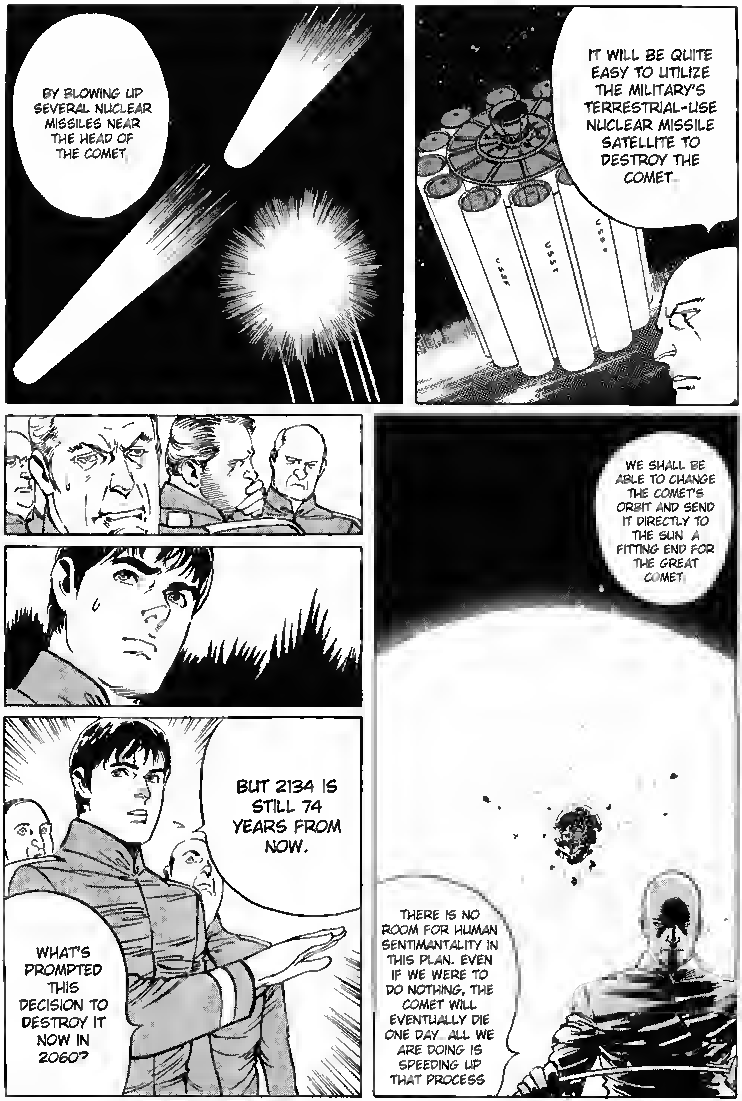
DAMN IT THE SULPHIDE'S STICKING TO THE WINDOWS AGAIN!
IT'S FINE BUT WE'VE GOT SOME HYDROGEN SULPHIDE THAT BROKE IN
COME BACK LATER, WE'RE BUSY.
IS THIS THE STATION NICKNAMED THE FIRST RING OF HELL?
IT'S BEEN AWHILE, HASN'T IT, DAD?
SEYMOUR!?
Lower the altitude of the probe. How's the B-zone atmosphere analysis coming along Eddy?

CLOUDS OF SULPHURIC ACID,
SURFACE TEMPERATURES OF 500°C AND PRESSURES AS HIGH AS THE OCEAN FLOORS BACK ON EARTH DUE TO ALL THE CARBON DIOXIDE
OOPS, MY BAD. I FORGOT YOU WERE STILL IN THE ARMY. HERE, HAVE A DRINK! HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?
PX
44
SORRY ABOUT THE CRAMPED UP QUARTERS BUT THIS IS THE ONLY PRIVATE PLACE ONBOARD
I HAVE NO IDEA HOW YOU CAN MANAGE TO LIVE FOR YEARS ON THIS GODFORSAKEN PLANET
WELL, IT'S BETTER THAN BACK WHEN I WAS IN THE SPACE ARMY...
HAHA...

AND STUDYING THOSE SIMILARITIES IS THE OFFICIAL PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH STATION BUT
VENUS AND EARTH ARE A LOT MORE SIMILIAR THAN YOU THINK ALMOST LIKE A SET OF TWINS
WELL, IT MAY LOOK LIKE THAT NOW BUT THERE WAS A TIME WHEN VENUS WAS A COOL PLANET AND EARTH WAS THE BURNING HELLHOLE.
WHAT I'M REALLY EXCITED ABOUT IS HALLEY'S COMET WHICH IS DUE BACK HERE NEXT YEAR!
UNLIKE IN 1986, WE'LL BE ABLE TO SEE IT BETTER THAN EVER WITH THE ADVANCES WE'VE MADE!
VENUS'LL BE THE BEST PLACE TO VIEW THAT COMET FROM, YOU KNOW
DAD
FOLLOW ME SON LET ME SHOW YOU THE MACHINES WE'LL BE USING IT TO OBSERVE IT WITH OH, AND I NEED TO INTRODUCE YOU ALL TO THE OTHER STAFF MEMBERS TOO

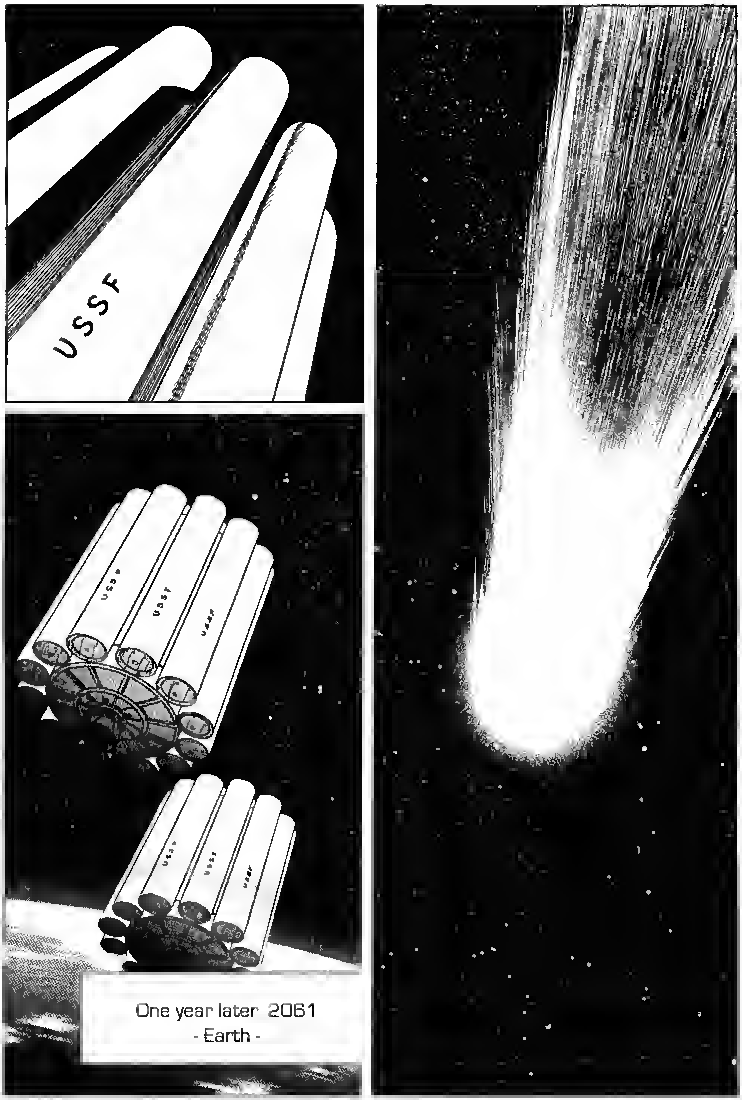
THE HALLEY'S COMET WILL BE DESTROYED!?
IT WAS DEEMED TO BE A THREAT BY THE COMPUTERS AND...
THE MILITARY HAS BEGUN TO PREPARE FOR ITS DESTRUCTION USING NUCLEAR MISSILES
WHAT!?

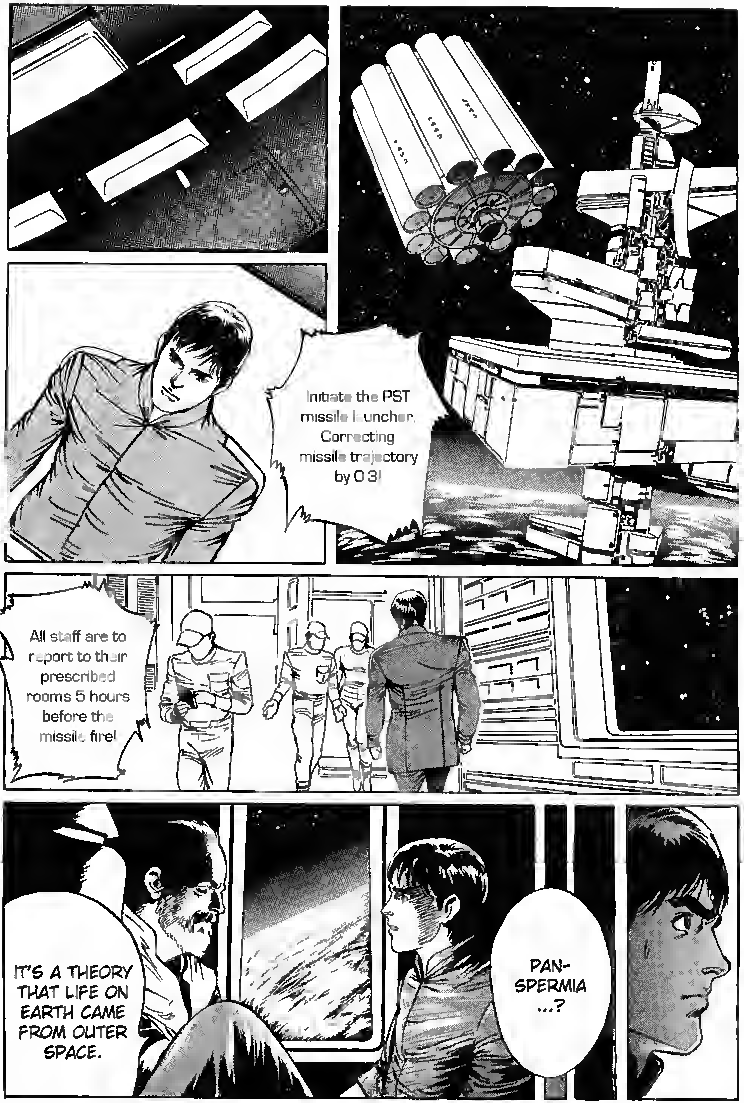
DUE TO JUPITER'S LOCATION DURING THE COMET'S ORBIT, ITS GRAVITY WILL CAUSE THE COMET'S ORBIT TO DEVIATE,
GENTLEMEN, WHAT YOU SEE BEFORE YOU IS THE PROJECTED ORBIT FOR HALLEY'S COMET 74 YEARS FROM NOW,
IN THE YEAR 2134.
SENDING IT ON A DIRECT COURSE FOR EARTH!
ALTHOUGH THE PREDICTED CHANCES OF IT HITTING EARTH IS ONLY 20%...
IF IT DOES, THERE'S A 80% CHANCE THAT THE COMET'S CORE WILL SUCCESSFULLY PENETRATE OUR ATMOSPHERE.
NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE IMPACT WOULD RELEASE A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF ENERGY, ENOUGH TO DESTROY MOST OF HUMANITY.
SO WHAT'S OUR PLAN...?


BY BLOWING UP SEVERAL NUCLEAR MISSILES NEAR THE HEAD OF THE COMET.
IT WILL BE QUITE EASY TO UTILIZE THE MILITARY'S TERRESTRIAL-USE NUCLEAR MISSILE SATELLITE TO DESTROY THE COMET.
USSR
WE SHALL BE ABLE TO CHANGE THE COMET'S ORBIT AND SEND IT DIRECTLY TO THE SUN. A FITTING END FOR THE GREAT COMET.
BUT 2134 IS STILL 74 YEARS FROM NOW.
WHAT'S PROMPTED THIS DECISION TO DESTROY IT NOW IN 2060?
THERE IS NO ROOM FOR HUMAN SENTIMANTALITY IN THIS PLAN. EVEN IF WE WERE TO DO NOTHING, THE COMET WILL EVENTUALLY DIE ONE DAY. ALL WE ARE DOING IS SPEEDING UP THAT PROCESS

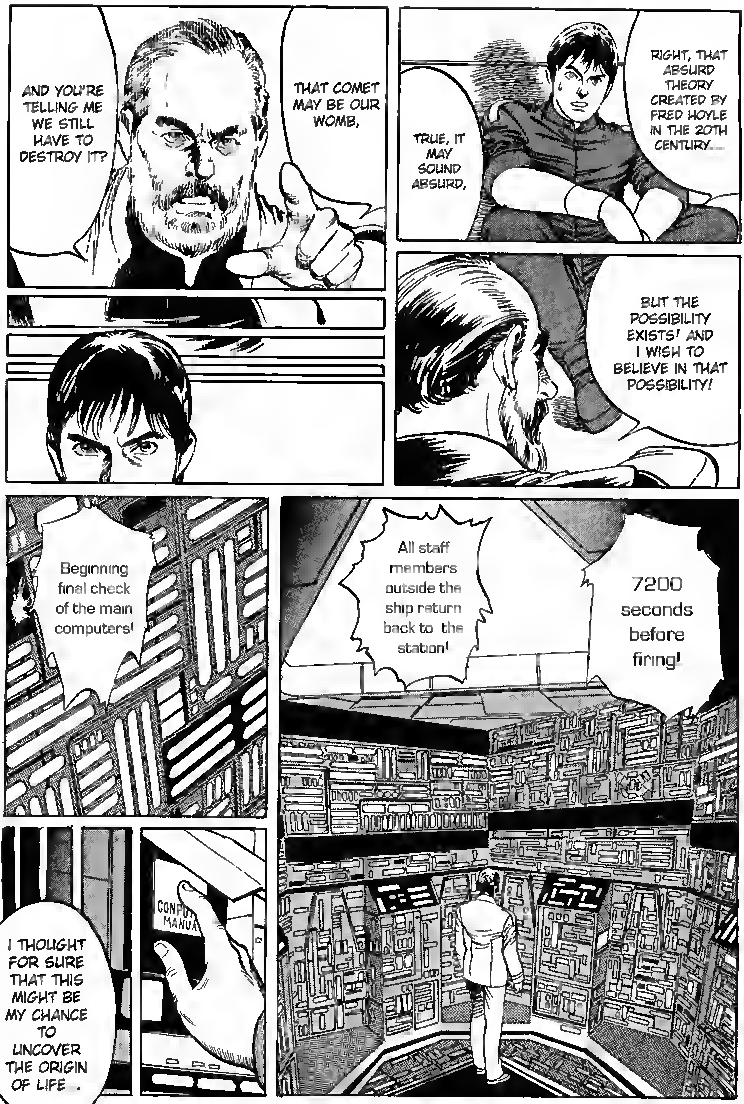
YES, IT'S AN UNPREDICT-ABLE WORLD WE LIVE IN.
"NEVER LEAVE THAT TILL TOMORROW WHICH YOU CAN DO TODAY," CAPT. STAHBACH
NOBODY CAN GUARANTEE THE FUTURE
WHO CAN SAY FOR SURE THAT WE'LL HAVE ANY MISSILES LEFT TO SPARE 74 YEARS FROM NOW? YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M GETTING AT, DON'T YOU...?
HEH HEH HEH
HA HA

THOSE BASTARDS ARE ALWAYS DOING WHATEVER THE HELL THEY WANT! LIKE WITH THEIR NUCLEAR TESTING OUT IN SPACE!
THOSE DAMN WAR-MONGERING BASTARDS!
BUT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO THINK UP OTHER SOLUTIONS!
IF NOT, THEN 74 YEARS FROM NOW, IT'LL...
BUT IT CAN'T BE DENIED THAT THIS MUST BE DONE!
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT WHEN YOU WERE ONCE IN THE MILITARY YOURSELF!? YOU EVEN HAD ME ENLIST TOO!
HUMANITY HAS NO RIGHT TO DESTROY CELESTIAL BODIES AS IT WISHES! ESPECIALLY NOT THE MILITARY!

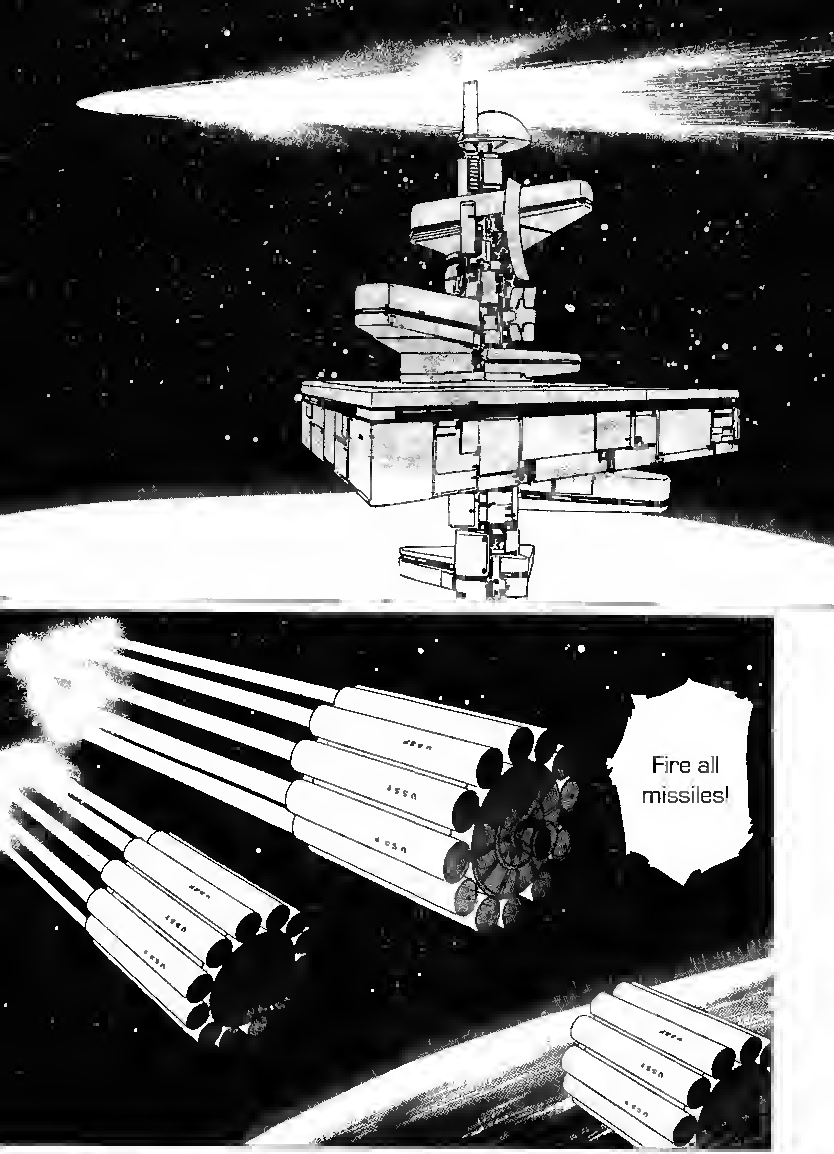

USSF
USSF
USSF
USSF
USSF
USSF
One year later 2061
- Earth -


Initiate the PST missile Launcher. Correcting missile trajectory by 0.3!
All staff are to report to their prescribed rooms 5 hours before the missile fire!
IT'S A THEORY THAT LIFE ON EARTH CAME FROM OUTER SPACE.
PAN-SPERMIA ...?

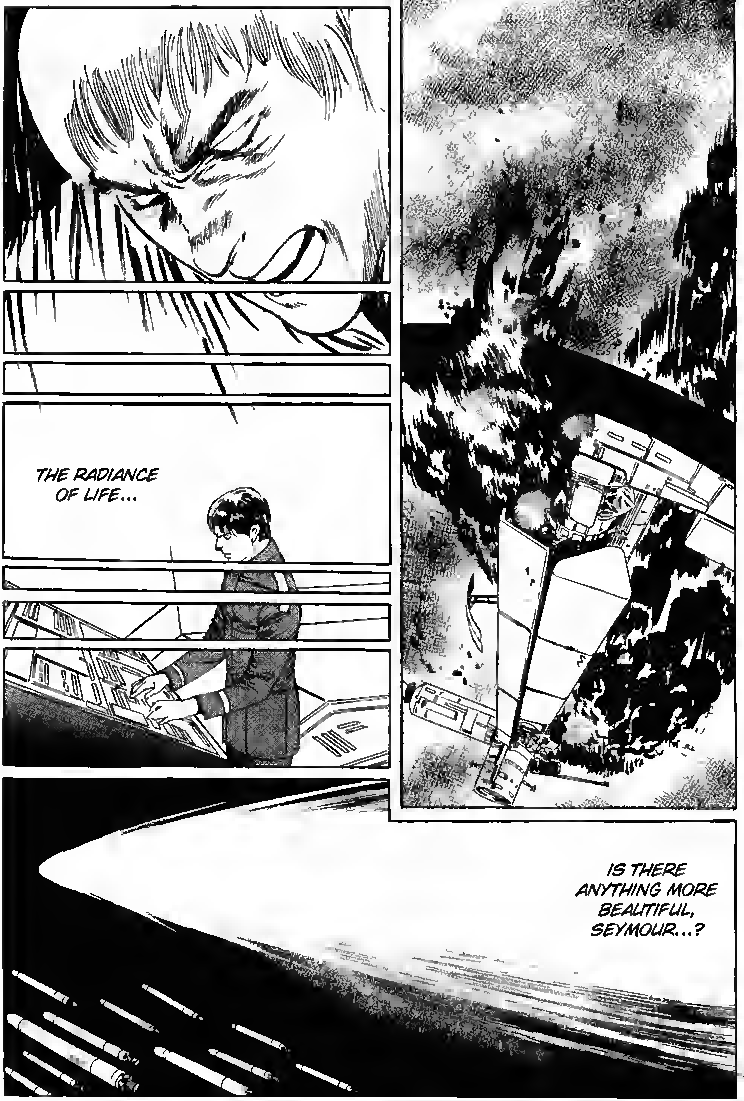
SOME SAY THAT PRIMIEVAL LIFE FORMS WERE CARRIED TO EARTH BY COMETS...!
THE THEORY STATES THAT CERTAIN EXTREMOPHILE BACTERIA AND BUILDING BLOCKS OF LIFE WERE TRANSPORTED ACROSS SAPCE BY LYING DORMANT ON THE SURFACE OF ICY COMETS
AND AS THEY NEAR A STAR, THE SOLAR RADIATION CAUSES PARTS OF THE COMET TO MELT AND SCATTER, CARRYING ALONG THE ORGANISMS AND ORGANIC MATERIALS
SOME OF THESE MAY HAVE REACHED EARTH,
AND AFTER BILLIONS OF YEARS, THEY PROPAGATED AND EVOLVED


AND YOU'RE TELLING ME WE STILL HAVE TO DESTROY IT?
THAT COMET MAY BE OUR WOMB,
TRUE, IT MAY SOUND ABSURD,
RIGHT, THAT ABSURD THEORY CREATED BY FRED HOYLE IN THE 20TH CENTURY...
BUT THE POSSIBILITY EXISTS! AND I WISH TO BELIEVE IN THAT POSSIBILITY!
Beginning final check of the main computers!
All staff members outside the ship return back to the station!
7200 seconds before firing!
I THOUGHT FOR SURE THAT THIS MIGHT BE MY CHANCE TO UNCOVER THE ORIGIN OF LIFE...

THAT COMET ONLY COMES ONCE EVERY 75 OR 76 YEARS
IT'S A ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY!
SPACE HAS CHANGED ME SEYMOUR
YOU'LL COME TO UNDERSTAND ONE DAY AS WELL.
THE RADIANCE OF LIFE...
IS THERE ANYTHING MORE BEAUTIFUL, SEYMOUR...?


Fire all
missiles!

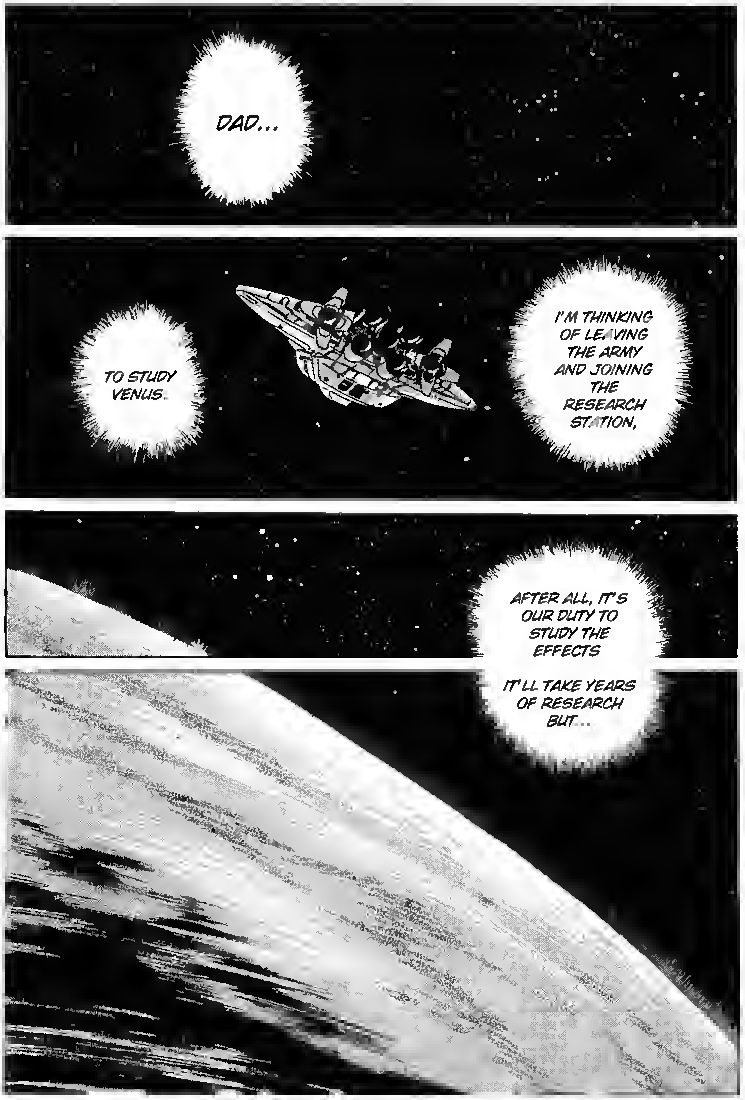
15 hours before reaching point of explosion
THE ISHTAR STATION EXPLODED !?
YES, THE PLANETARY SHUTTLE FAILED TO DOCK PROPERLY AND CAUSED A PRESSURE DIFFERENCE WHICH LED TO THE EXPLOSION
UNFORTUNATELY, THE ACCIDENT KILLED PROFESSOR STAHBACH, WHO WAS PLANNING TO RETURN TO EARTH TO OBJECT TO THE COMET'S DESTRUCTION.

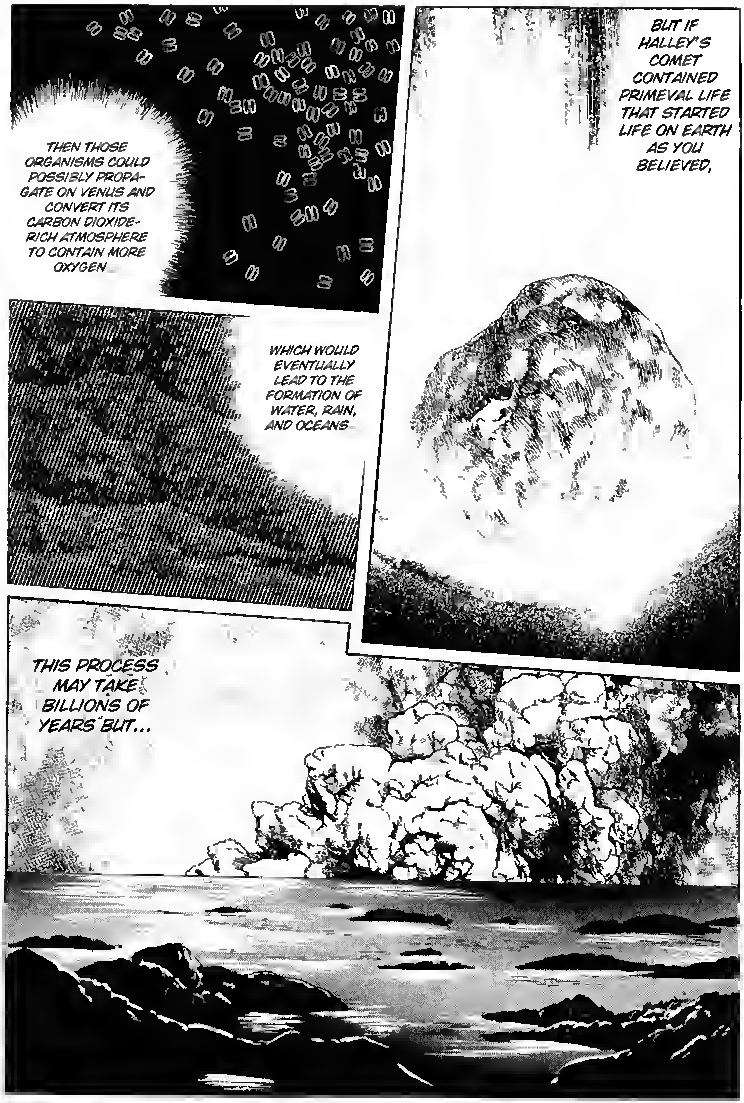

THE RADIANCE OF LIFE...
IS THERE ANYTHING MORE BEAUTIFUL, SEYMOUR...?

What does the main computer's tracking data say?
5 hours before the missiles reach their target point! No abnormalities detected!
MAIN COMP-UTER ...?
BZZT

VENUS
AND WHERE'S HALLEY'S COMET HEADED TOWARDS NOW!?
THE EXPLOSION HAPPENED TOO FAR FROM THE COMET TO DIRECT IT TO THE SUN!
W-WHAT!? WHY DID THE MISSILES EXPLODE ALREADY!? IT'S TOO SOON!
SOMETHING'S STRANGE WITH THE COMPUTER! WHERE'S CAPT. STAHBACH!?

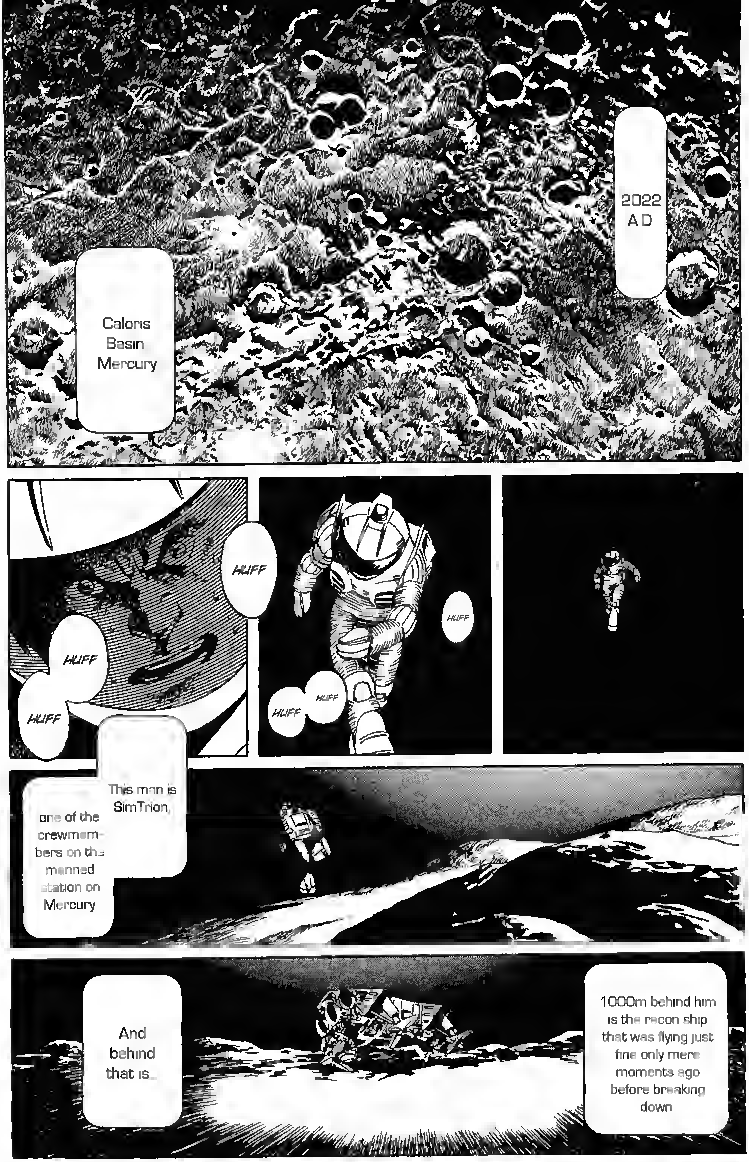
TO VENUS!?

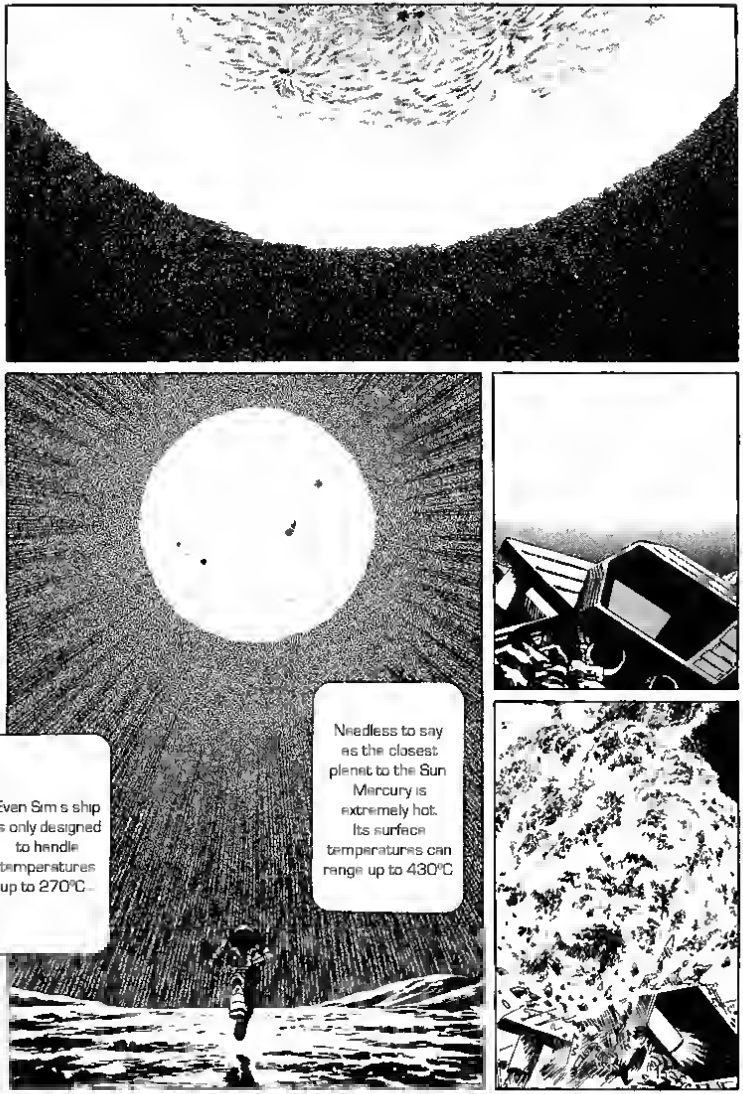

DAD...
I'M THINKING OF LEAVING THE ARMY AND JOINING THE RESEARCH STATION.
TO STUDY VENUS.
AFTER ALL, IT'S OUR DUTY TO STUDY THE EFFECTS
IT'LL TAKE YEARS OF RESEARCH BUT...

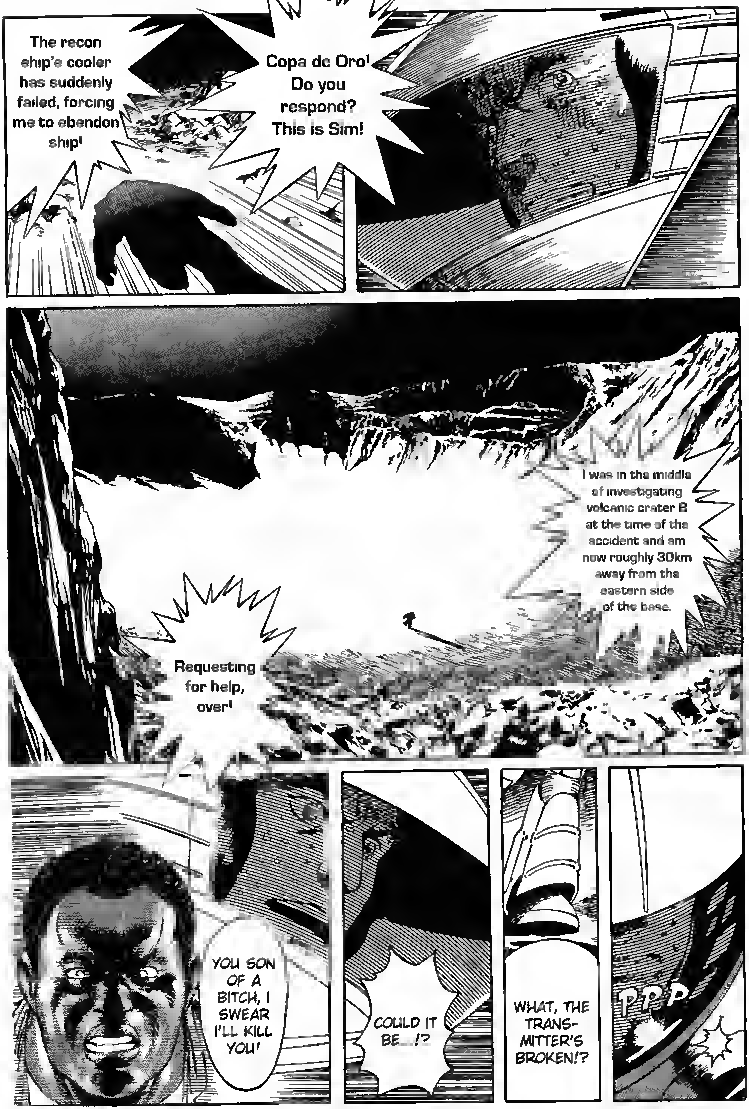

THEN THOSE ORGANISMS COULD POSSIBLY PROPAGATE ON VENUS AND CONVERT ITS CARBON DIOXIDE-RICH ATMOSPHERE TO CONTAIN MORE OXYGEN...
BUT IF HALLEY'S COMET CONTAINED PRIMEVAL LIFE THAT STARTED LIFE ON EARTH AS YOU BELIEVED,
WHICH WOULD EVENTUALLY LEAD TO THE FORMATION OF WATER, RAIN, AND OCEANS...
THIS PROCESS MAY TAKE BILLIONS OF YEARS BUT...

BUT I, TOO, WANT TO BELIEVE.
THE HISTORY OF LIFE MAY REPEAT AGAIN ON VENUS,
ALLOWING THE LEGACY OF HALLEY'S COMET TO MAKE ITS GREAT RETURN.

The Burning Man

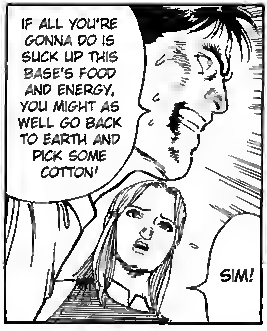

2022 A.D
Calonis Basin Mercury
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
This man is SimTrion, one of the crewmembers on the manned station on Mercury
And behind that is...
1000m behind him is the recon ship that was flying just fine only mere moments ago before breaking down


Even Sim s ship is only designed to handle temperatures up to 270°C.
Needless to say as the closest planet to the Sun Mercury is extremely hot. Its surface temperatures can range up to 430°C


The recon ship's cooler has suddenly failed, forcing me to abandon ship!
Copa de Oro! Do you respond? This is Sim!
I was in the middle of investigating volcanic crater B at the time of the accident and am now roughly 30km away from the eastern side of the base.
Requesting for help, over!
YOU SON OF A BITCH, I SWEAR I'LL KILL YOU!
COULD IT BE...!?
WHAT, THE TRANS-MITTER'S BROKEN!?
PP-P...

STOP IT, YOU TWO!

I SWEAR I'LL KILL YOU, YOU SON OF A BITCH!


IF ALL YOU'RE GONNA DO IS SUCK UP THIS BASE'S FOOD AND ENERGY, YOU MIGHT AS WELL GO BACK TO EARTH AND PICK SOME COTTON!
SIM!

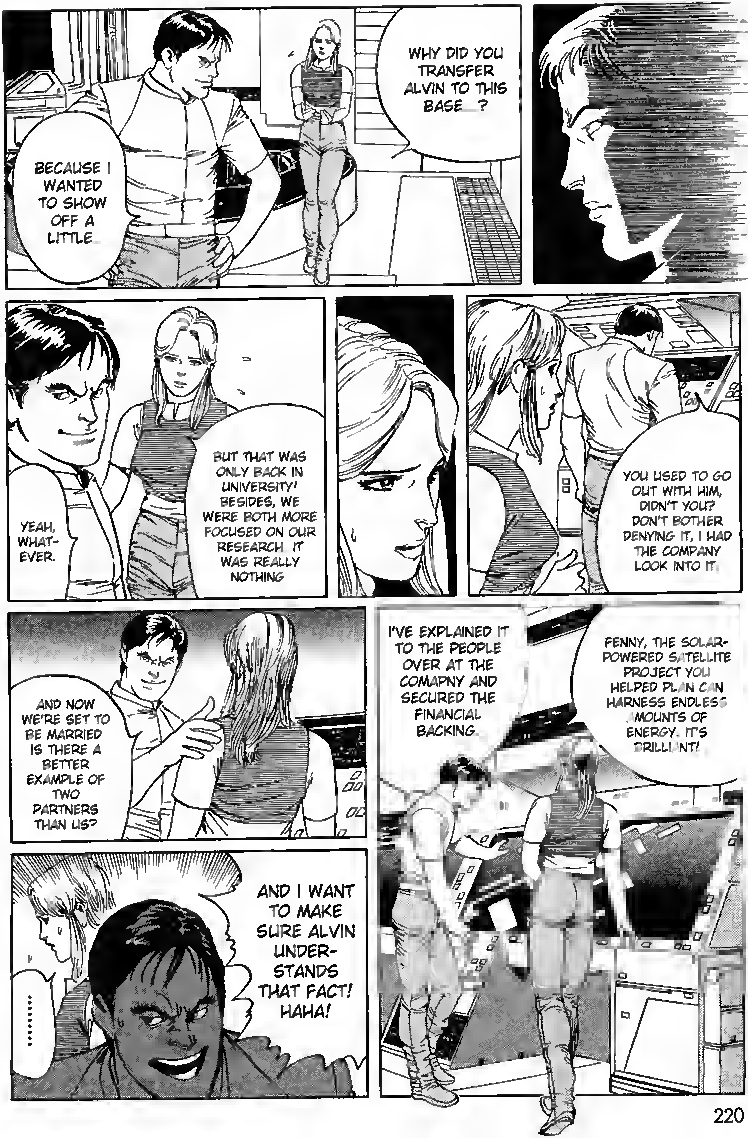
THE ONLY PEOPLE WE NEED ON THIS BASE ARE SPECIALISTS!

THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER PEOPLE THAT CAN TAKE YOUR PLACE... ESPECIALLY AMONG BLACKS...
THIS IS THE LAST STRAW, BEN! IF YOU START ANYMORE TROUBLES, I'LL HAVE YOU SENT BACK TO EARTH!
BEN, THAT'S ENOUGH!
DON'T FEEL TOO BAD, BRO. YOU JUST PICKED THE WRONG GUY TO MESS WITH. THAT'S ALL. HE'S THE HEIRESS OF THE TRION COMPANY
HE'S AS RACIST AS THEY COME.
CHRIST, WHAT A BASTARD HE IS...
THAT'S THE COMPANY WHO'S FINANCING 50% OF OUR PROJECT HERE ON MERCURY SO WE'VE GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO...
...BEN?

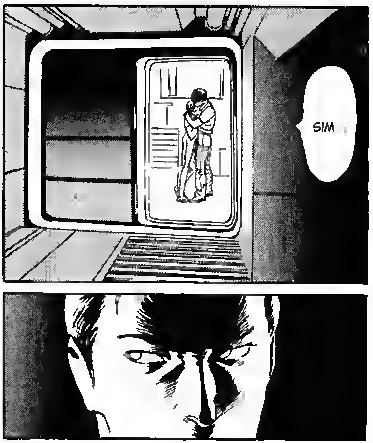
IF IT'S HIM, HE CERTAINLY WOULD HAVE HAD THE TIME AND CHANCE TO SABOTAGE MY SUIT AND THE SHIP...!
IT MUST'VE BEEN THAT BASTARD, BEN!
HUFF HUFF
I AIN'T GONNA DIE OUT HERE! I SWEAR I'LL GET BACK TO BASE AND HAVE HIS HEAD FOR THIS!
...SHIT.
RUN FASTER THAN THE SUN...
THE BASE IS AROUND 80KM WEST FROM HERE
I'LL HAVE TO RUN IF I WANT TO SURVIVE...
NO,
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS

HAHA,
C'MON, JUST HEAR ME OUT, ALVIN. IT'S JUST A THOUGH EXPERIMENT
I'M AFRAID IT'S JUST TOO RISKY.
Transport shuttle taking off. please stand by...
THE COOLER INSIDE SHOULD ALLOW YOU TO JUST BARELY SURVIVE
SO THE KEY IS TO MOVE FASTER THAN THE SUN RISES
IF YOU GO OUTSIDE WITH A SPACESUIT,
YOU'LL BE COMPLETELY FRIED WHEN THE SUN IS DIRECTLY OVER YOU.
BUT IF THE SUN'S NOT DIRECTLY OVER YOUR HEAD
EVEN AT THE EQUATOR, A PERSON SHOULD BE ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH MERCURY'S ROTATIONAL SPEED.
THE SUN MOVES PRETTY SLOWLY HERE ON MERCURY
IF THE RIGHT CHANCE CAME ALONG, HELL YEAH!
UNLIKE A CERTAIN SOMEONE, I'M QUITE CONFIDENT IN MY PHYSICAL CAPABILITIES!
SO...? YOU'RE SAYING YOU WANT TO RACE AGAINT THE SUN?
TRUE... A DAY ON MERCURY IS EQUIVALENT TO ROUGHLY 88 EARTH DAYS...

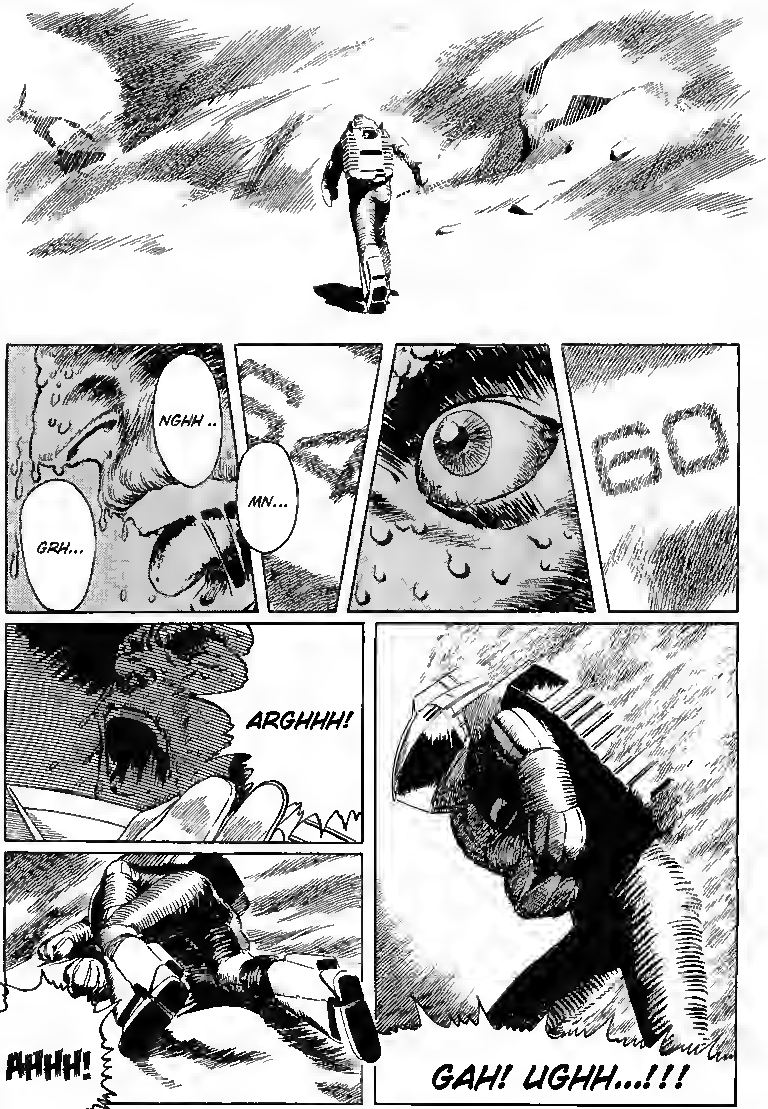
THE SUN HERE IS TERRIFYING. I FEEL LIKE EVEN MY VERY SOUL WILL BE BURNT TO A CRISP OUT HERE...
MERCURY'S A WORLD THAT'S ENDURED THE HARSH RAYS OF THE SUNS FOR BILLIONS OF THE YEARS
HEH...
SEEMS LIKE FENNY'S SURE TAUGHT YOU A LOT.
W-WHAT DID YOU SAY!?
ALVIN!
COULD IT HAVE BEEN HIM!?
IF YOU REALLY THINK YOU C N OUTRUN THE SUN DESPITE THE SAND, CRATERS, AND OTHER HARSH TERRAIN, FEEL FREE TO GO AHEAD...
HE MUST'VE DESPISED ME BECAUSE OF FENNY!
IT'S TRUE THAT I DID DRAG HIM OUT TO THE BASE HERE ON MERCURY SLIGHTLY AGAINST HIS WILL...
BUT THAT'S ALSO BECAUSE HE'S ONE OF THE BEST SCIENTISTS WHEN IT COMES TO SOLAR-POWER RESEARCH

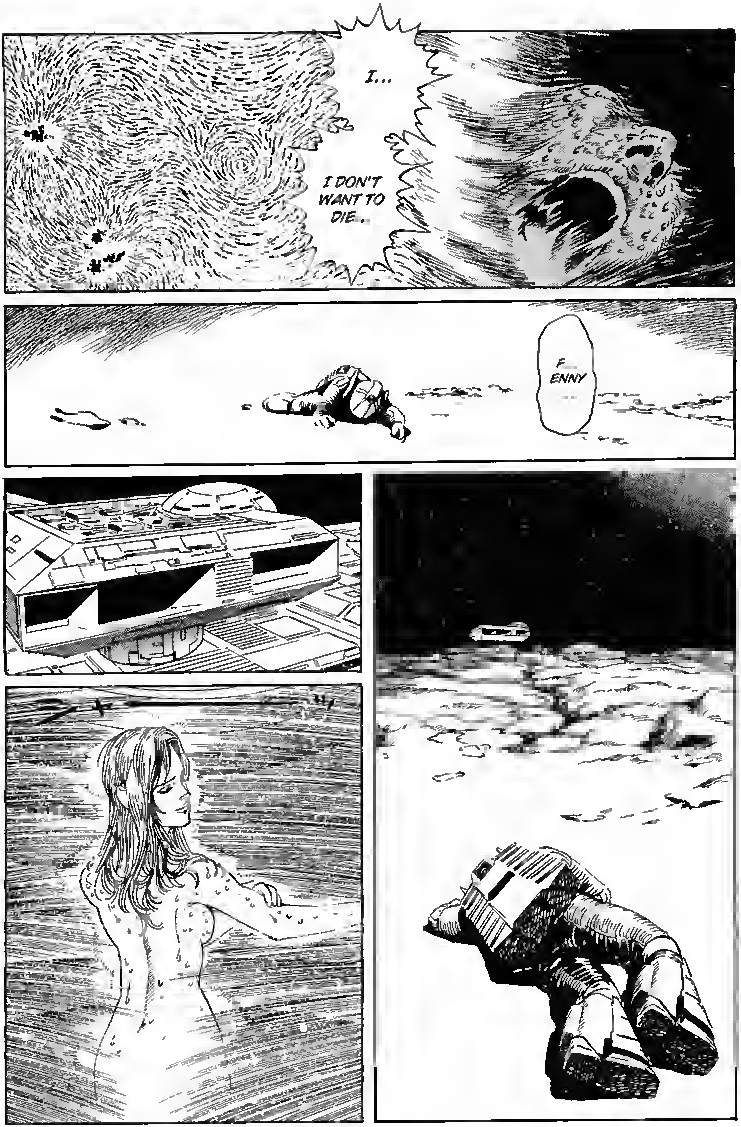

WHY DID YOU TRANSFER ALVIN TO THIS BASE...?
BECAUSE I WANTED TO SHOW OFF A LITTLE...
YEAH, WHAT-EVER.
BUT THAT WAS ONLY BACK IN UNIVERSITY! BESIDES, WE WERE BOTH MORE FOCUSED ON OUR RESEARCH. IT WAS REALLY NOTHING
YOU USED TO GO OUT WITH HIM, DIDN'T YOU? DON'T BOTHER DENYING IT, I HAD THE COMPANY LOOK INTO IT.
AND NOW WE'RE SET TO BE MARRIED IS THERE A BETTER EXAMPLE OF TWO PARTNERS THAN US?
I'VE EXPLAINED IT TO THE PEOPLE OVER AT THE COMAPNY AND SECURED THE FINANCIAL BACKING.
FENNY, THE SOLAR-POWERED SATELLITE PROJECT YOU HELPED PLAN CAN HARNESS ENDLESS MOUNTS OF ENERGY. IT'S BRILLIANT!
.....
AND I WANT TO MAKE SURE ALVIN UNDER-STANDS THAT FACT! HAHA!

I KNOW I'M NOT THE MOST FRIENDLY GUY OUT THERE BUT...
PLEASE DON'T THINK BADLY OF ME...
BUT I LOVE YOU, FENNY... SO PLEASE UNDERSTAND ME...
I NEED YOU. IT'S NOT JUST FOR THE PROJECT EITHER.
YOU'RE LIKE A GENTLE BREEZE TO ME. YOUR VERY PRESENCE ALONE IS SOOTHING.
I JUST KNOW THAT IF YOU'RE BY MY SIDE, I CAN CHANGE...!
CHANGE TO BE A BETTER PERSON...


SIM...

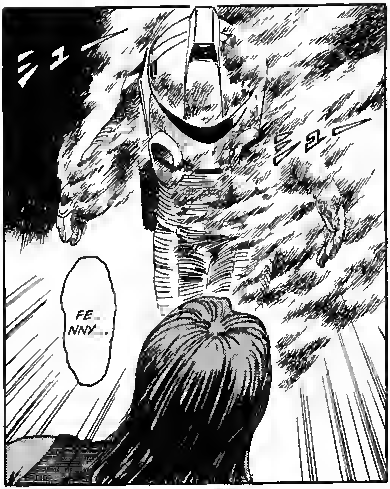
HUFF HUFF
50
48 C
PPP
HUFF HUFF
HUFF
A... ALVIN... WAS THIS YOUR DOING...!?
HUFF HUFF
HUFF HUFF


NGHH ..
MN...
GRH...
60
ARGHHH!
GAH! UGHH...!!!
AHHH!

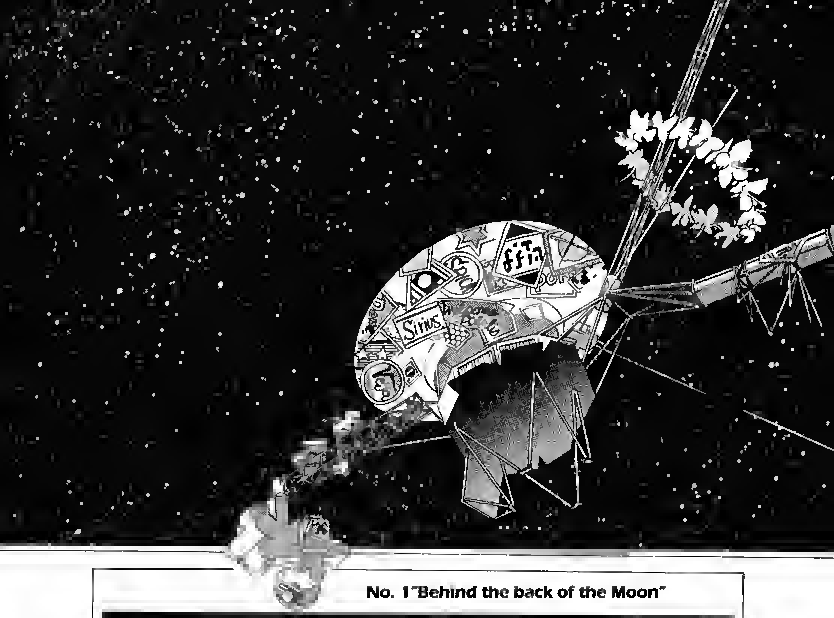

I...
I DON'T WANT TO DIE..
F...
ENNY

WITH YOUR PERSONALITY NOBODY ON THIS ENTIRE BASE WOULD SERIOUSLY TRY TO INVESTIGATE WHAT HAPPENED EVEN IF YOU SHOWED UP DEAD.
SIM, I NO LONGER HAVE A NEED FOR SUCH A DISGUSTING AND VILE MAN SUCH AS YOURSELF.
NOW THAT YOUR INHERITANCE IS MINE. MY RESEARCH PROJECT WILL HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
ミシミシ
ガシャン
アルビ、私よ…
ALVIR, IT'S ME…
内緒話 SOMETHING TO DISCUSS
T-THE AIRLOCK IS BURNING! WAIT! NO, DON'T COME INSIDE!
AGHH!
S... SOMEBODY STOP HIM!

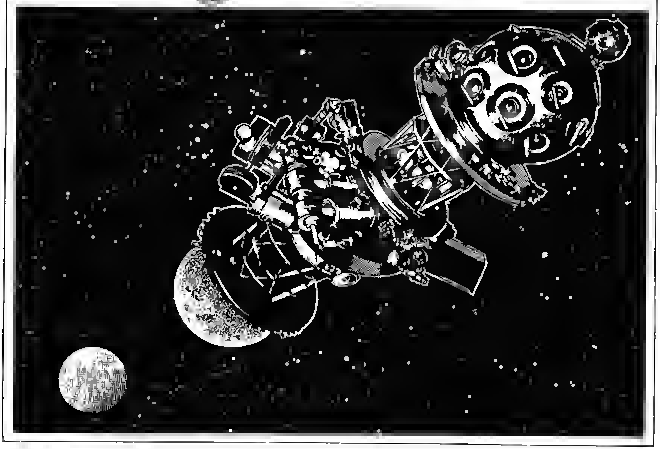
I LOV...


FE... NNY...

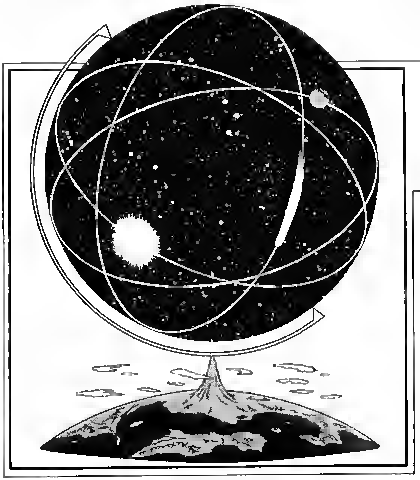
AGHHH!



No. 1"Behind the back of the Moon"

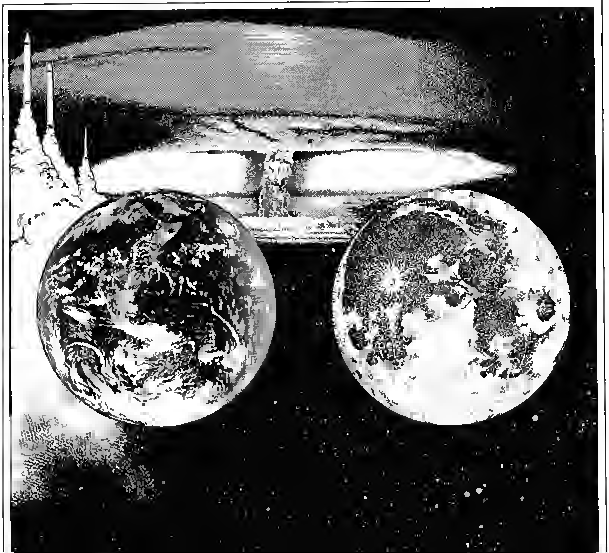


Messages from Space



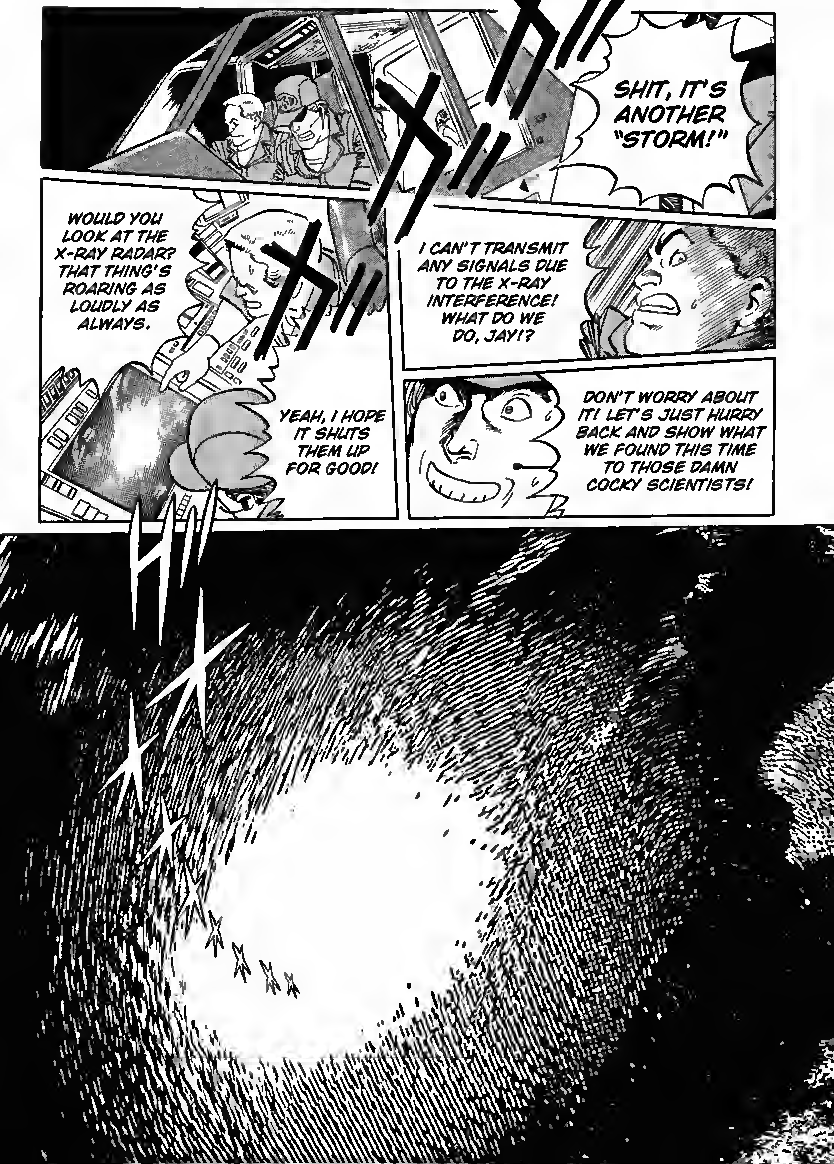
No.2
"The Ptolemaic World"

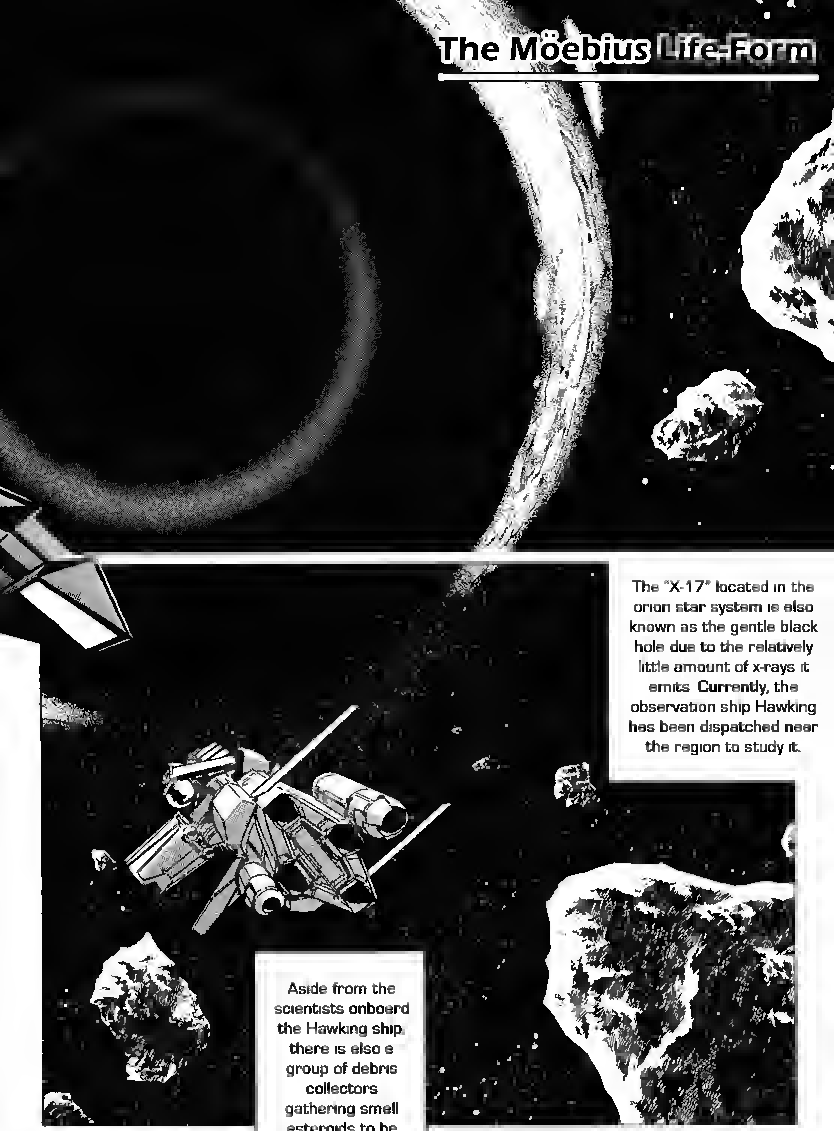
No.3
"The wishing star and the granting star"



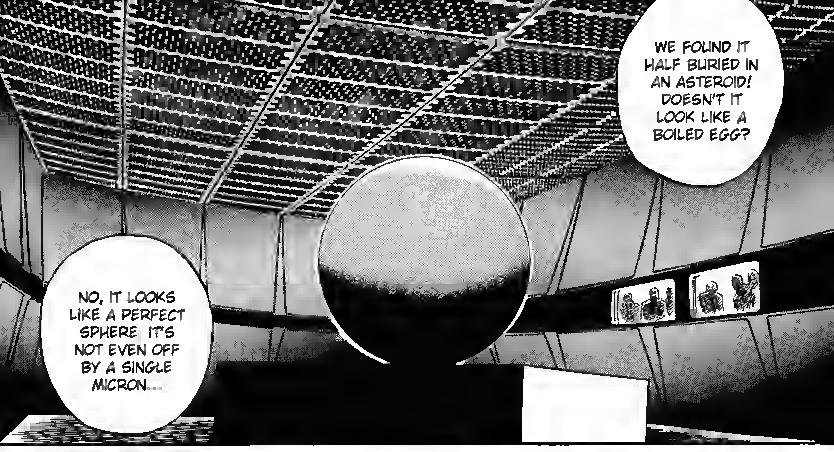
No.4
"Dark Nebula"
No.5
"The relation-
ship between
black holes
and white
holes"

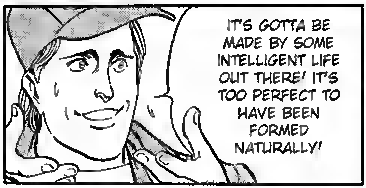
Star Dust Memories

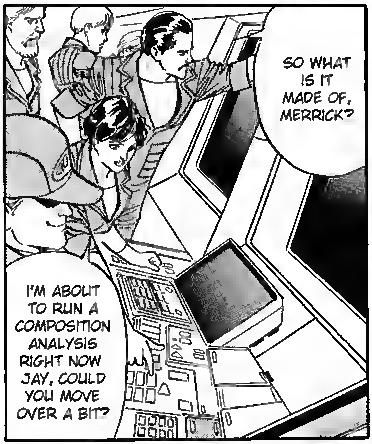

SHIT, IT'S ANOTHER "STORM!"
I CAN'T TRANSMIT ANY SIGNALS DUE TO THE X-RAY INTERFERENCE! WHAT DO WE DO, JAY!?
WOULD YOU LOOK AT THE X-RAY RADAR? THAT THING'S ROARING AS LOUDLY AS ALWAYS.
YEAH, I HOPE IT SHUTS THEM UP FOR GOOD!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT! LET'S JUST HURRY BACK AND SHOW WHAT WE FOUND THIS TIME TO THOSE DAMN COCKY SCIENTISTS!

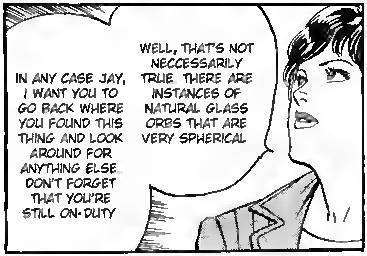

The "X-17" located in the orion star system is also known as the gentle black hole due to the relatively little amount of x-rays it emits. Currently, the observation ship Hawking has been dispatched near the region to study it.
Aside from the scientists onboard the Hawking ship, there is also a group of debris collectors gathering small asteroids to be used as samples for research

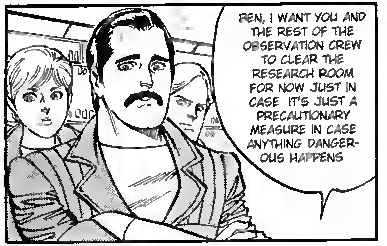
♪
Though they normally only collected useless junk, on this particular occasion, they brought over a most unusual object.

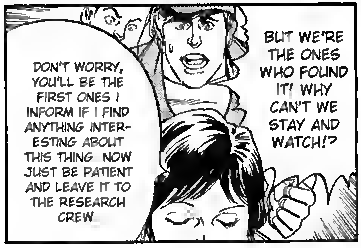

WE FOUND IT HALF BURIED IN AN ASTEROID! DOESN'T IT LOOK LIKE A BOILED EGG?
NO, IT LOOKS LIKE A PERFECT SPHERE. IT'S NOT EVEN OFF BY A SINGLE MICRON...

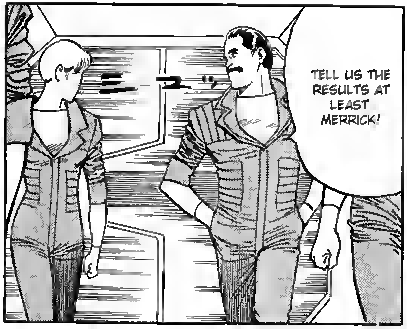

IT'S GOTTA BE MADE BY SOME INTELLIGENT LIFE OUT THERE! IT'S TOO PERFECT TO HAVE BEEN FORMED NATURALLY!

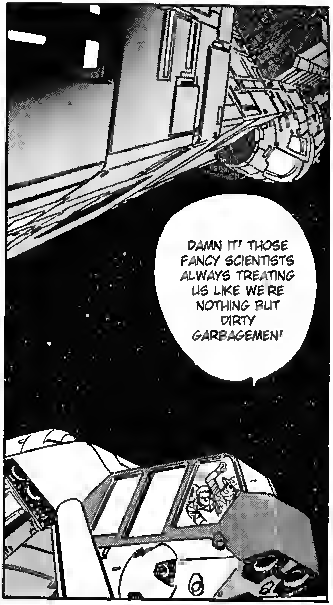

SO WHAT IS IT MADE OF, MERRICK?
I'M ABOUT TO RUN A COMPOSITION ANALYSIS RIGHT NOW JAY, COULD YOU MOVE OVER A BIT?

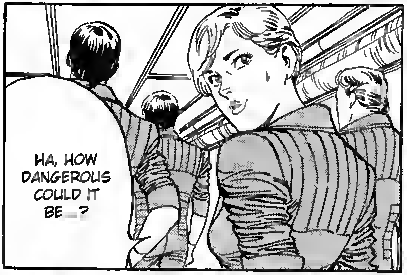

WELL, THAT'S NOT NECCESSARILY TRUE. THERE ARE INSTANCES OF NATURAL GLASS ORBS THAT ARE VERY SPHERICAL
IN ANY CASE JAY, I WANT YOU TO GO BACK WHERE YOU FOUND THIS THING AND LOOK AROUND FOR ANYTHING ELSE. DON'T FORGET THAT YOU'RE STILL ON DUTY

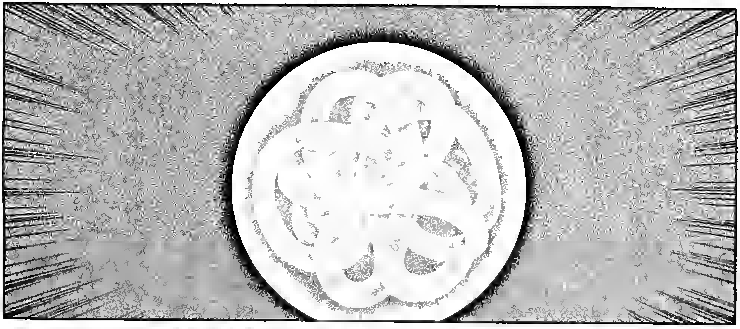

REN, I WANT YOU AND THE REST OF THE OBSERVATION CREW TO CLEAR THE RESEARCH ROOM FOR NOW JUST IN CASE. IT'S JUST A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE IN CASE ANYTHING DANGEROUS HAPPENS


BUT WE'RE THE ONES WHO FOUND IT! WHY CAN'T WE STAY AND WATCH!?
DON'T WORRY, YOU'LL BE THE FIRST ONES I INFORM IF I FIND ANYTHING INTERESTING ABOUT THIS THING. NOW JUST BE PATIENT AND LEAVE IT TO THE RESEARCH CREW

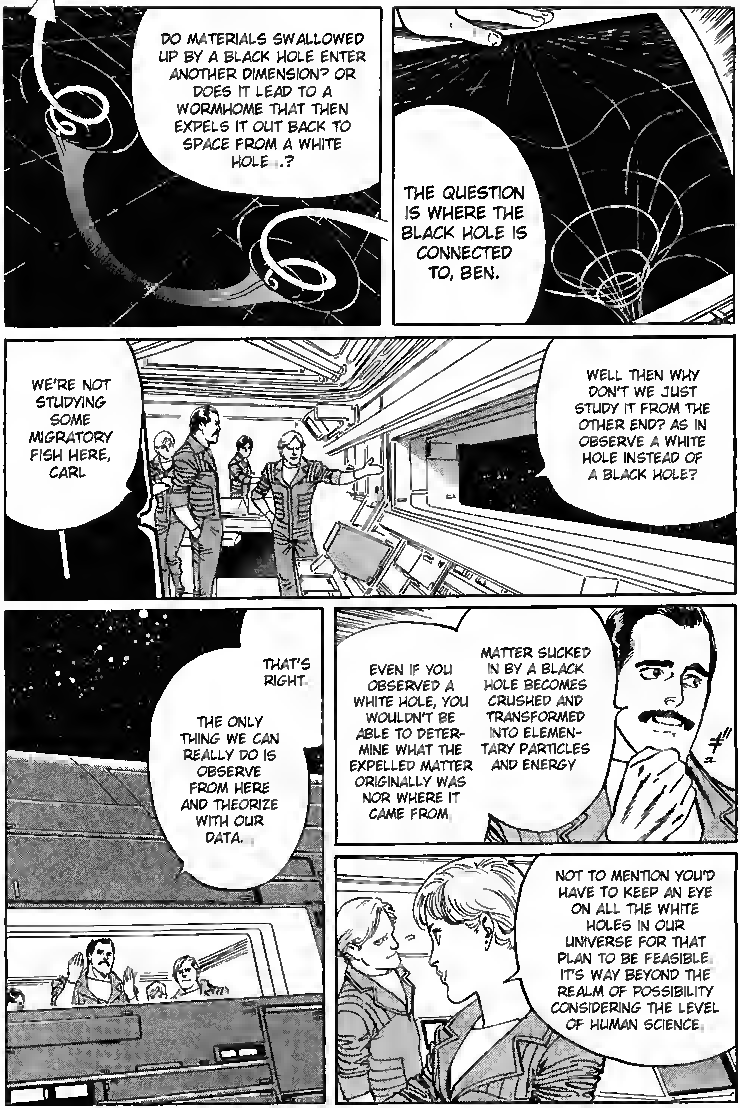

TELL US THE RESULTS AT LEAST MERRICK!


DAMN IT! THOSE FANCY SCIENTISTS ALWAYS TREATING US LIKE WE'RE NOTHING BUT DIRTY GARBAGEMEN!


HA, HOW DANGEROUS COULD IT BE...?

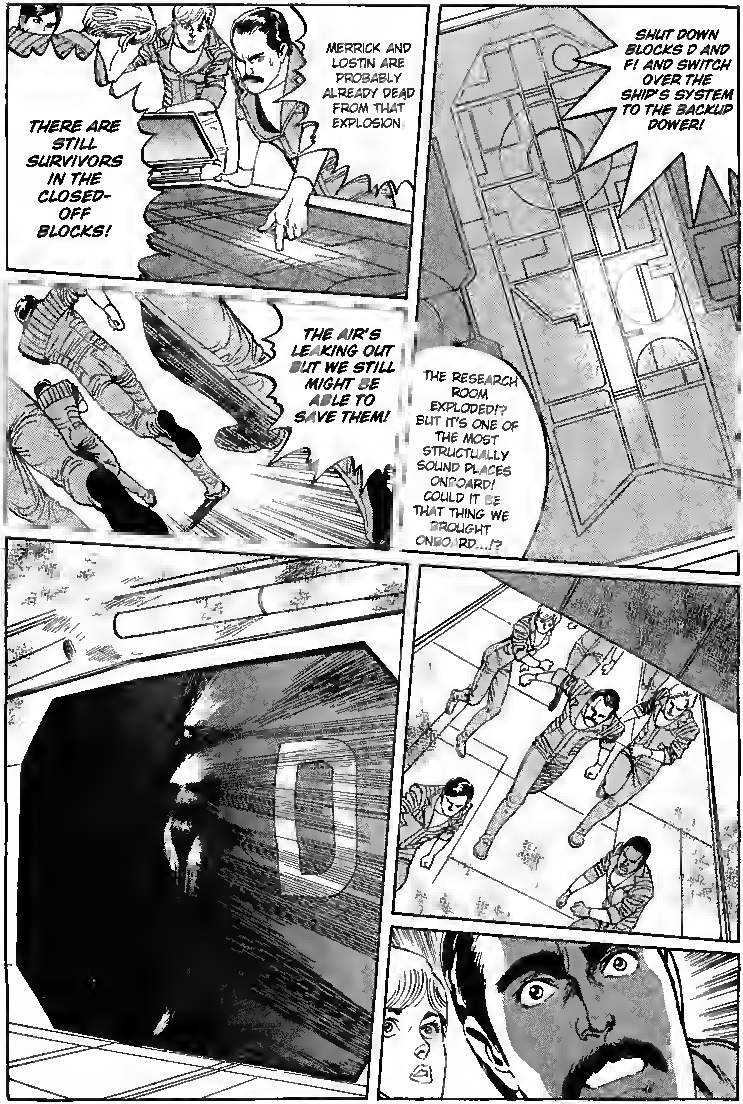


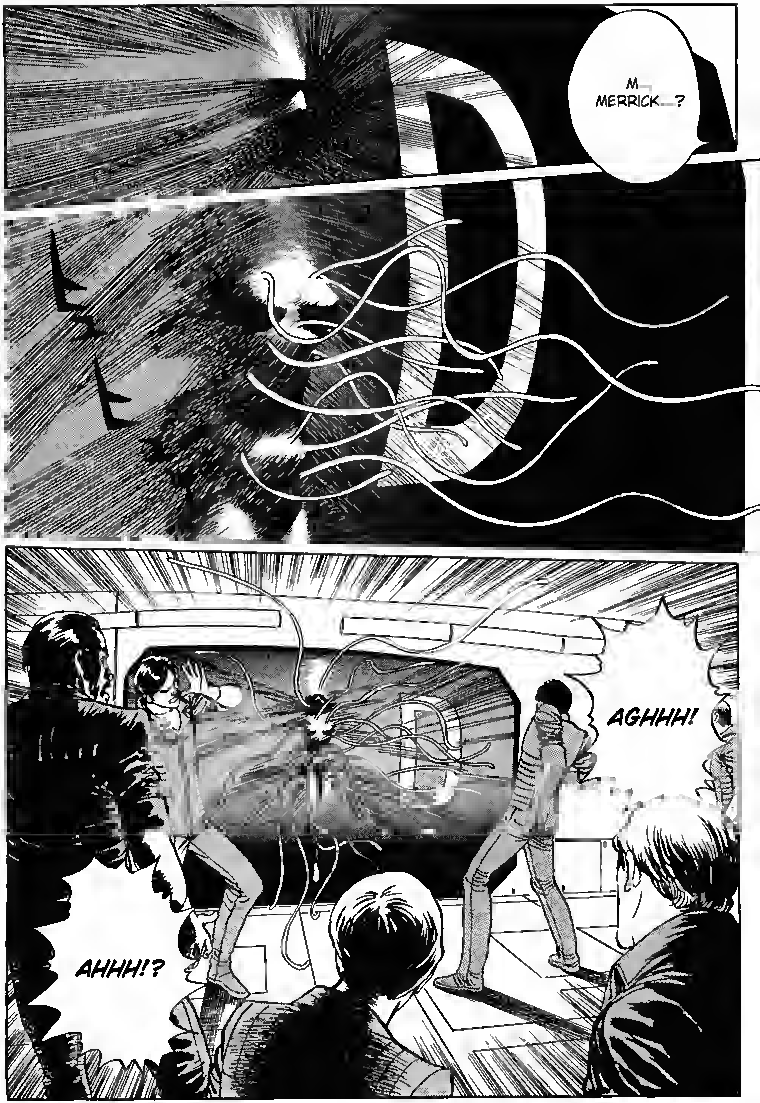
I KNEW IT! IT'S DEFINITELY NOT NATURAL MATERIAL!
THIS IS THE IMAGE OBTAINED FROM THE NEUTRON SCANNER THE OUTSIDE SEEMS TO BE MADE OF CEMENTED CARBON


DO MATERIALS SWALLOWED UP BY A BLACK HOLE ENTER ANOTHER DIMENSION? OR DOES IT LEAD TO A WORMHOME THAT THEN EXPELS IT OUT BACK TO SPACE FROM A WHITE HOLE..?
THE QUESTION IS WHERE THE BLACK HOLE IS CONNECTED TO, BEN.
WE'RE NOT STUDYING SOME MIGRATORY FISH HERE, CARL.
WELL THEN WHY DON'T WE JUST STUDY IT FROM THE OTHER END? AS IN OBSERVE A WHITE HOLE INSTEAD OF A BLACK HOLE?
THAT'S RIGHT.
THE ONLY THING WE CAN REALLY DO IS OBSERVE FROM HERE AND THEORIZE WITH OUR DATA.
EVEN IF YOU OBSERVED A WHITE HOLE, YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DETERMINE WHAT THE EXPELLED MATTER ORIGINALLY WAS NOR WHERE IT CAME FROM.
MATTER SUCKED IN BY A BLACK HOLE BECOMES CRUSHED AND TRANSFORMED INTO ELEMENTARY PARTICLES AND ENERGY
NOT TO MENTION YOU'D HAVE TO KEEP AN EYE ON ALL THE WHITE HOLES IN OUR UNIVERSE FOR THAT PLAN TO BE FEASIBLE. IT'S WAY BEYOND THE REALM OF POSSIBILITY CONSIDERING THE LEVEL OF HUMAN SCIENCE.

JUST WHAT IS THAT THING...?
THAT TWISTED TUNNEL INSIDE REMINDS ME OF A MÖBIUS STRIP
カチッ
WELL, WHY DON'T WE TAKE A LOOK INSIDE BY MAKING AN INCISION WITH THE PARTICLE BEAM?
ﾅﾅﾅﾅﾅ…

AGHHH!

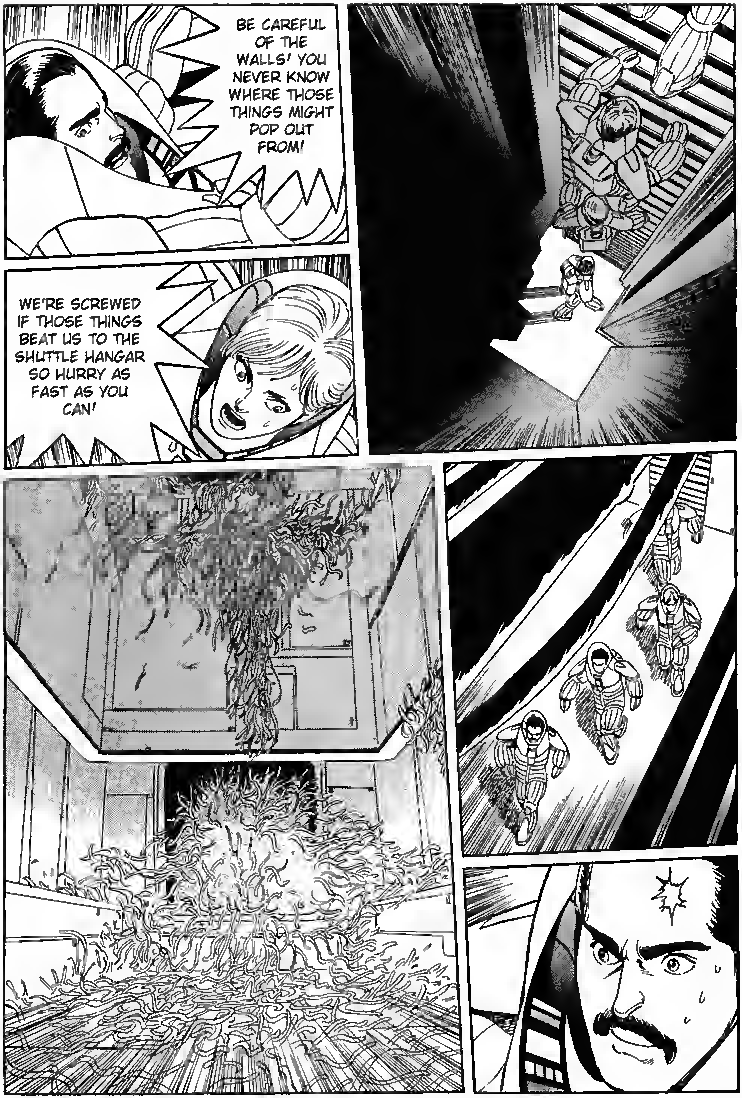

MERRICK AND LOSTIN ARE PROBABLY ALREADY DEAD FROM THAT EXPLOSION
THERE ARE STILL SURVIVORS IN THE CLOSED-OFF BLOCKS!
SHUT DOWN BLOCKS D AND F! AND SWITCH OVER THE SHIP'S SYSTEM TO THE BACKUP POWER!
THE AIR'S LEAKING OUT BUT WE STILL MIGHT BE ABLE TO SAVE THEM!
THE RESEARCH ROOM EXPLODED!? BUT IT'S ONE OF THE MOST STRUCTUALLY SOUND PLACES ONBOARD! COULD IT BE THAT THING WE BROUGHT ONBOARD...!?

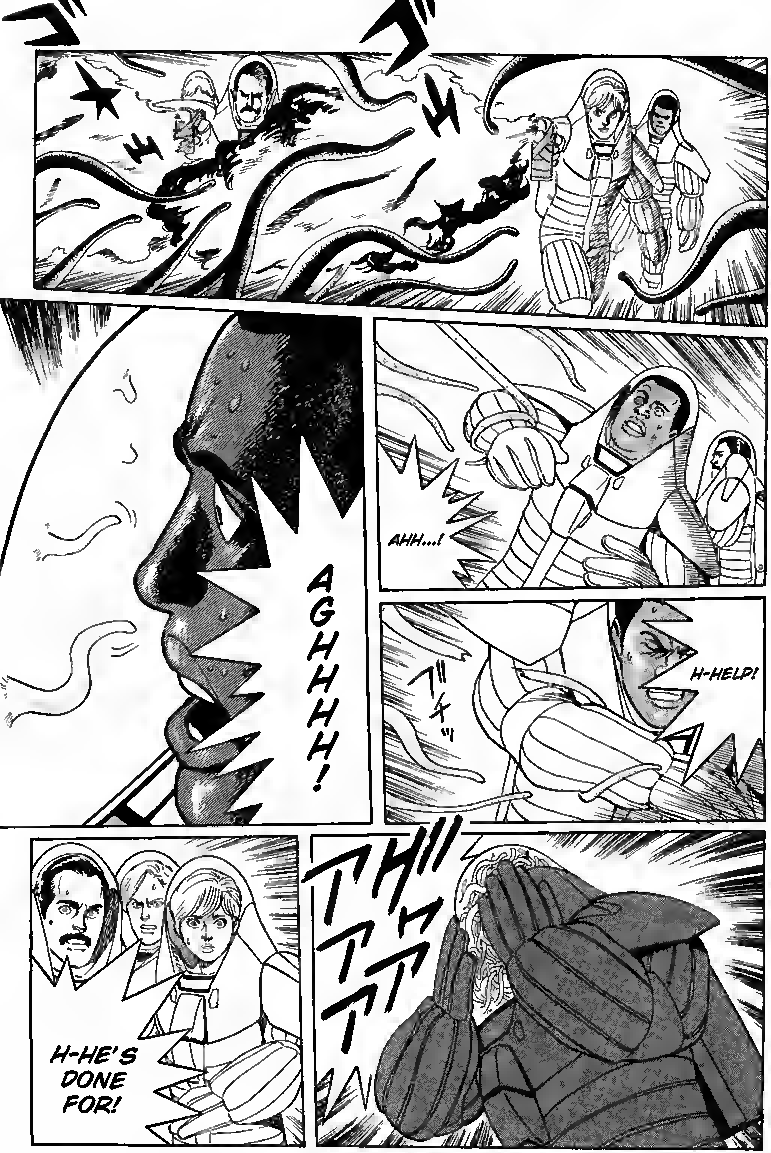

M...
MERRICK...?
AGHHH!
AHHH!?

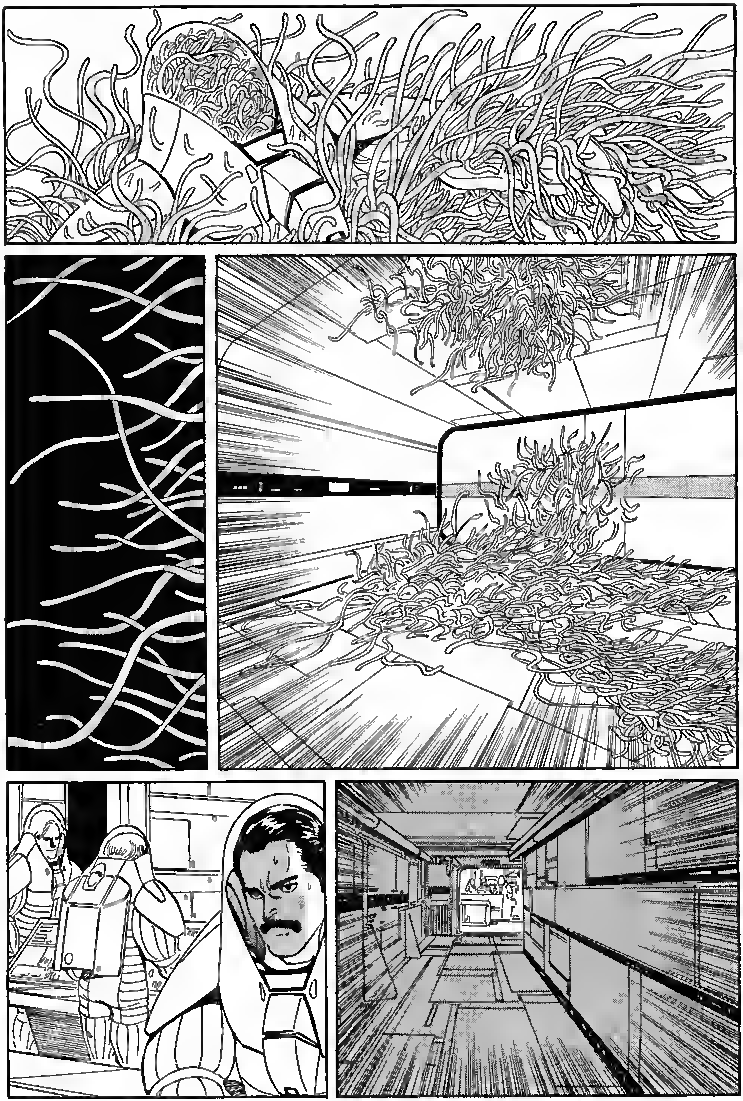
AGHH!
CLOSE THE SHUTTERS!
SHARAFF! LEE NEEDS FIRST AID!
IT MUST BE SOME ALIEN LIFE!
DID THAT THING COME OUT FROM THE SPHERE?
NGHH...
ARGHHH!
HANG IN THERE, LEE!

NO, WAIT! SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH LEE! DON'T TOUCH HIM!
GRR...
G-GET AWAY FROM HIM! DON'T LET THAT THING TOUCH YOU!
SHAR-AFF!?

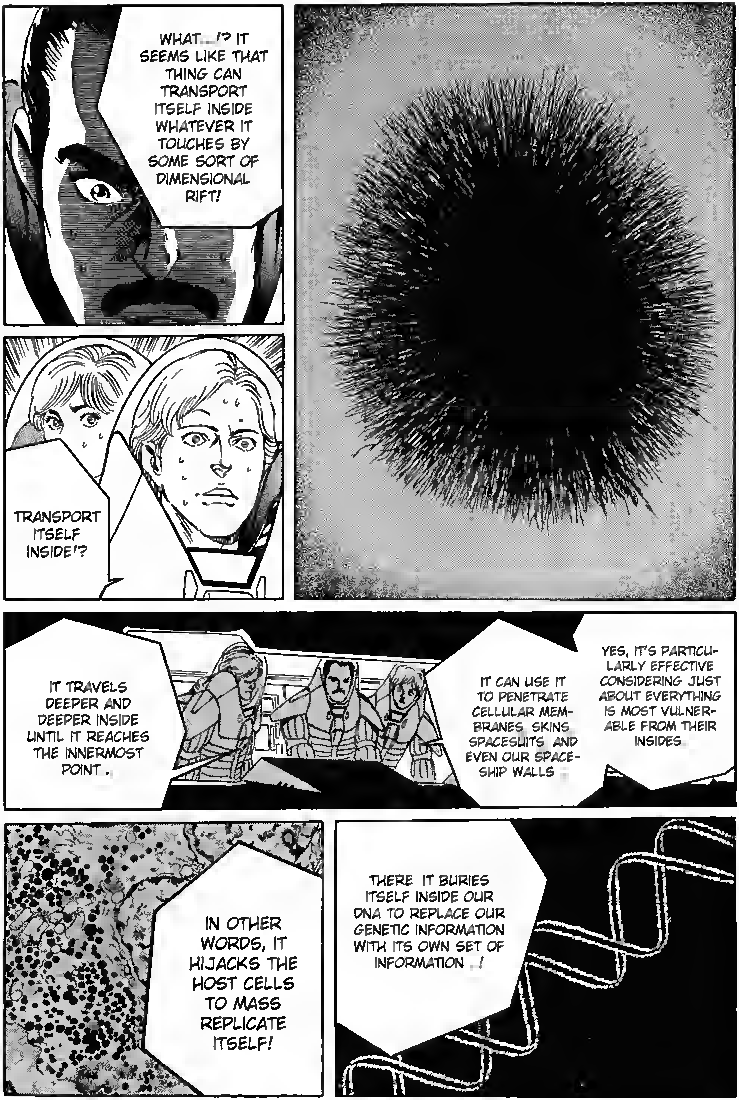
GYAA!
AGHHH!
THANKS, THAT'LL COME IN HANDY. YOU SHOULD GO PUT ON YOUR SPACESUIT NOW.
HERE, IT'S A MAKE-SHIFT FLAME-THROWER
カリッ!


BE CAREFUL OF THE WALLS! YOU NEVER KNOW WHERE THOSE THINGS MIGHT POP OUT FROM!
WE'RE SCREWED IF THOSE THINGS BEAT US TO THE SHUTTLE HANGAR SO HURRY AS FAST AS YOU CAN!


AGHHHH!
AHH...!
H-HELP!
H-HE'S DONE FOR!



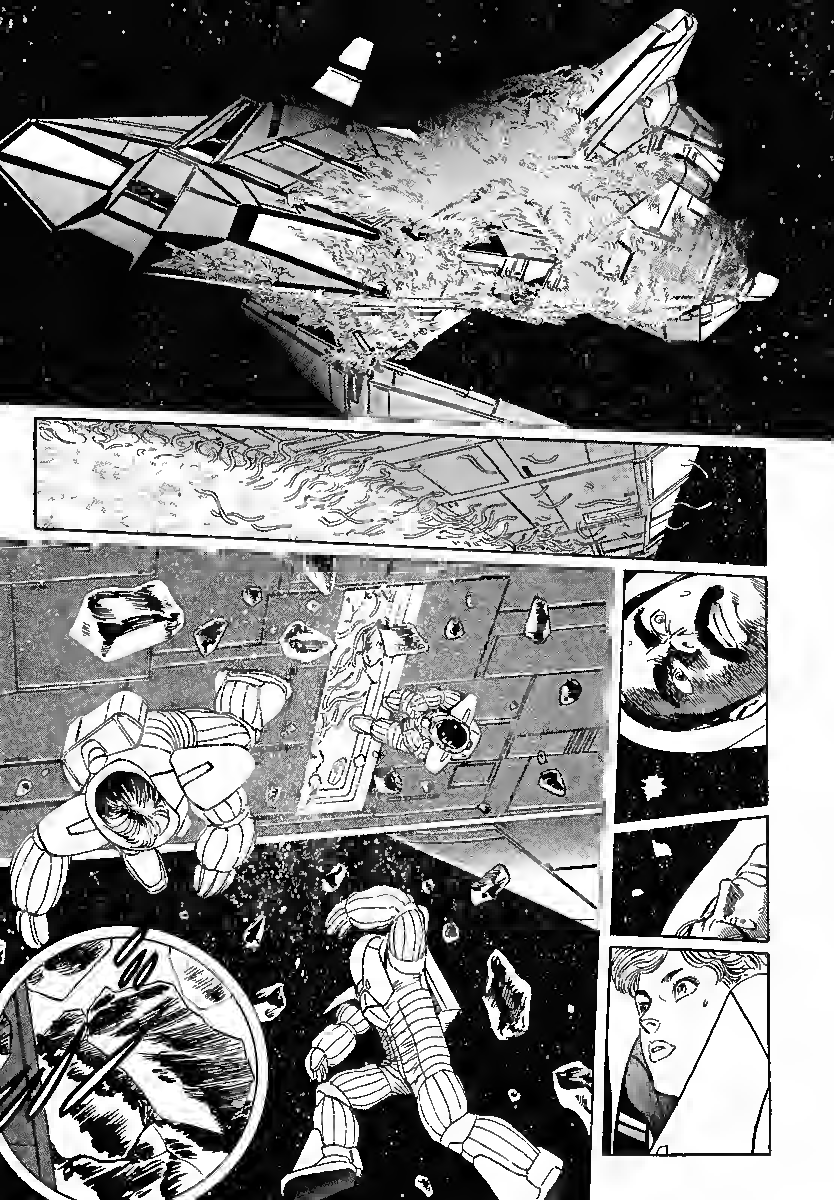
WELL, IF WE DO JUMP OUT, WITH THE X-RAY STORM CAUSED BY THE X-17, WE'LL ONLY BE ABLE TO SURVIVE FOR 15MIN AT BEST
WELL KEEP TRYING! IT'S THE ONLY HOPE WE HAVE!
THE "STORM" OUTSIDE IS MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO SEND A SIGNAL TO JAY'S CREW ON THE WORK VESSEL
ONCE THEY MAKE IT TO THIS ROOM, WE'VE GOT NO OTHER OPTION THAN TO JUST JUMP OUTSIDE INTO SPACE...
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
I MAY BE ABLE TO LEARN ABOUT THE METHOD OF INFECTION OR PROPA-GATION...
THE SUITS' COMPUTERS ARE STILL ACTIVE. I'M TRYING TO FIND OUT ABOUT WHAT THAT THING IS FROM THE CREW'S PHYSI-OLOGICAL DATA

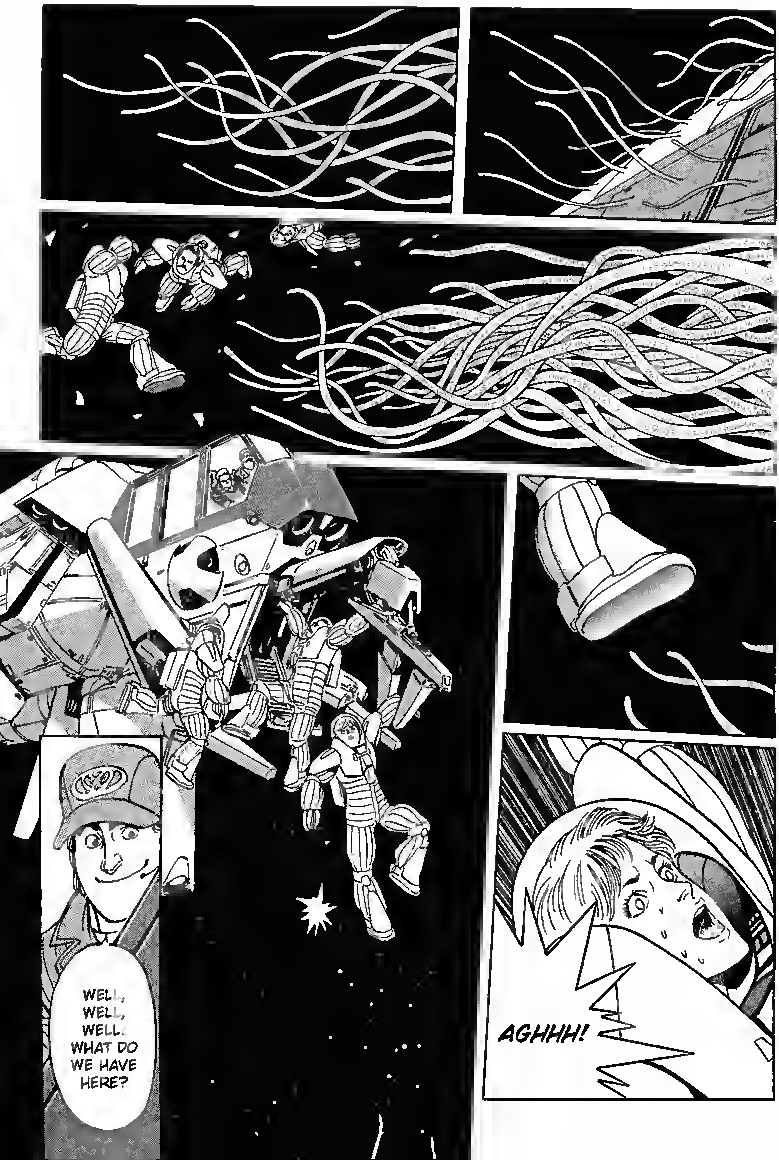

WHAT...!? IT SEEMS LIKE THAT THING CAN TRANSPORT ITSELF INSIDE WHATEVER IT TOUCHES BY SOME SORT OF DIMENSIONAL RIFT!
TRANSPORT ITSELF INSIDE!?
IT TRAVELS DEEPER AND DEEPER INSIDE UNTIL IT REACHES THE INNERMOST POINT.
IT CAN USE IT TO PENETRATE CELLULAR MEMBRANES SKINS SPACESUITS AND EVEN OUR SPACESHIP WALLS.
YES, IT'S PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE CONSIDERING JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING IS MOST VULNERABLE FROM THEIR INSIDES.
IN OTHER WORDS, IT HIJACKS THE HOST CELLS TO MASS REPLICATE ITSELF!
THERE IT BURIES ITSELF INSIDE OUR DNA TO REPLACE OUR GENETIC INFORMATION WITH ITS OWN SET OF INFORMATION..!

IT'S LIKE A VIRUS. IT USES ITS HOST CELLS TO PROPAGATE INFINITELY!
DO YOU THINK THIS THING WASN'T MEANT TO BE FOUND?
MAYBE SOME ALIENS OUT THERE INTENTIONALLY SEALED THIS THING INSIDE THAT SPHERE AND TRIED TO THROW IT AWAY INTO THE BLACKHOLE.
HM?
NO MATTER HOW TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED THOSE ALIENS COULD BE, I'M SURE EVEN THEY WOULD'VE FOUND THIS THING OVERWHELMINGLY DANGEROUS.

I-IT'S COMING FROM THE CEILING TOO!
CARL, MOVE AWAY FROM THERE FOR A SEC!
THEY'RE BLOCKING THE AISLES!

W-WHAT'RE YOU DOING TO THE HIGH POLYMER WINDOW!?
WE'LL DIE IF WE STAY INSIDE HERE ANY LONGER SO WE MIGHT AS WELL JUMP OUTSIDE!
IF YOU HEAT IT UP TOO MUCH, THE TEMPERATURE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE WILL CAUSE IT TO CRACK!
COME ON! BREAK!
AGHH!




WELL, WELL, WELL. WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?
AGHHH!

IT'S ALL YOUR DAMN FAULT! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MANY PEOPLE DIED BECAUSE YOU PICKED UP THAT THING!?
W-WHAT DID YOU HIT ME FOR!? I JUST SAVED YOUR LIFE!
MAYBE SOME INTELLIGENT LIFE OUT THERE USED THAT ORGANISM TO UNCOVER THE SECRETS OF WHAT LIES INSIDE A BLACK HOLE..
AN EXPERI-MENT...!? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I WONDER IF THAT THING WAS REALLY THROWN AWAY BY SOMEONE

AFTER ALL, WITH THAT ORGANISM'S SPECIAL ABILITY, MAYBE IT COULD TRANSPORT ITSELF INSIDE THE BLACK HOLE BEFORE IT GETS CRUSHED BY THE GRAVITATIONAL PRESSURE...
WHETHER ANOTHER UNIVERSE OR DIMENSION REALLY EXISTS INSIDE THAT BLACK HOLE OR NOT...
WHO CAN SAY FOR SURE...? BUT MAYBE ONE DAY, WE'LL UNDERSTAND FOR SURE.

Stardust Memories -End-

TRANSLATED BY HOX

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